

The Guardian Of The Mibu Wolves

by Jinxes

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Summary: An animal in the Shinsengumi headquarters shouldn't cause so much trouble, shouldn't have anything to do with war or death, it was meant to only be something to come home to, something to make them happy when off the battlefield. But how does one cat with a fearsome past and mysterious blue eyes change the future of the Shinsengumi?

Currently editing chapters

1. Chapter 1 (Edited)

Hey guys! Sorry for such the long damn wait I can say many reasons why I stopped updating and none you guys probably care about lol. Mostly I just started college and I got swamped with anxiety and stress. I have been working on editing all my old chapters because I feel they could have been better and I was going to update it all in one big batch but I felt I wanted ya'lls honest opinions over the new chapters so here we go! All chapter names will have a noted (Edited) on the end so you guys know which ones are edited and which ones are not. I do have chapter thirteen almost done but I have to edit that to match my new chapter changes so don't worry I am working on them and so sorry for the wait hope you guys ain't mad! Without any further rambling from me enjoy!

* * *

><p>The sound of hurried footsteps bounced off the walls of the dark alleyways they were running through. A lone brunette boy ran for his life as the two men behind him gained ground; fear pulsed through his veins making him stumble and cry out for help. He couldn't believe the mess he'd got into, as he turned the corner to another alleyway he failed to notice a small creature in front of his path its large blue eyes watched him as he stepped on its tail.<p>

The creature let out a horrifying howl of pain. The boy fell backwards onto his butt away from the dark creature, he muttered an apology after and apology to it. His large brown eyes widened at the

creature as it scratched his face in anger, and then meowed in satisfaction at the new red lines that sported the tail steppers face. Dark chuckles from behind the boy and cat, brought the boy out from his rant of apologies. He let out a cry of his own, picked the cat up into his arms, and took off down the alleyway once again.

The cat let out a series of hisses as it was jostled around in the rather feminine boy's arms. The wrong footing brought him to the ground throwing the cat out of his arms. He stumbled to his feet and hid behind a wall. As he waited for the two men to leave or worse find him, he looked at the feline that stood out in the open, the moon's lights illuminated its bright silver fur, its ocean hues twinkled with hidden amusement and anger at being thrown around like a rag doll.

"Here kitty, kitty...Come here where it's safe little kitty." The brunette boy whispered to the feline as he tried to coax it back to where he was. Said cat looked at him and twitched its tail before it let out a loud meow that alerted the two men to their position.

The boy freaked out. He waved his hands at the highly satisfied cat before he banged his head against the wall in exasperation and fear. He froze when he heard the sound of a fight. He looked up from his position he noticed four men in total now, two of which were the rogue samurai that chased him, and the other two had pure white hair and glowing red eyes. They wore blue haoris with the kanji for Makoto. He watched in terror as the two rogues were slaughtered in front of him; blood coated the walls of the alleyway.

One of the rogue samurai's body fell backwards and landed to the right of the enraged blood coated feline. The two white haired men moved forward towards the cat as it hissed and growled before one spotted the boy who shivered against the wall. The devil like creature grinned down at him and stalked towards his position with his katana raised. The feline only glanced once from the corner of its eye at him before turning its attention back to the remaining monster in front of it. The creature laughed at the feline, its grip on its katana tightened. The sound pissed the feline off and it swiped its claws at the creature. The aforementioned creature drew back, it raised its katana, but before the blow came the white haired man was pierced from behind by another katana.

The offender removed his Katana from the body then turned quickly and charged again. He stabbed the other creature through its heart; wrenching his blade from it in one quick motion. He flicked his wrist to throw the blood off his katana and onto the wall instead.

The boy was shaken by the events and gazed up at the man that saved his life. His purple hair was tied back away from his face and hung limply over his right shoulder; a few rogue strands graced his handsome face. The man felt something bite him, but before he could swat the cat away it jumped up on his shoulder rubbing its furry cheek against his before licking it in a thankful manner. Around that time another man made his presence known as he entered the dark alleyway.

"Huh...Too bad, I planned on taking them out all by myself, Saito-Kun. It's only moments like these you work too fast my friend." The man named Saito turned his head towards the voice. He gave an indifferent look to the figure with brick brown hair and mischievous

green eyes.

"I simply acted quickly to carry out my duty nothing more..." Saito replied in a bland tone. He saw out the corner of his eye the cat's paw pawing at open air beckoning the newcomer over. The other man smirked at the feline and walked over to them giving the cowered boy a once over, but ignoring his presence for now optioning for a much more pleasant thing; teasing. He stopped in front of Saitou and the cat before reaching down just a bit to pet the cat on its head. He treated it like it was a child that needed to be congratulated for doing something good.

"Good Midnight, if it wasn't for your annoying meowing we wouldn't of found you in time. Who knew you could be anything other than something to bring the ladies to us."

The cat hissed at that comment before it buried itself in Saito's scarf lividly and relaxed once it got away from the teasing samurai. The brunette man pouted a bit at the feline running away so fast, but he wasn't deterred much. He turned to the boy that was still cowered, but now looking a little more relaxed at the scene that had played out in front of him. That quickly changed when the man smirked down at him. His eyes scared him; they were lustful for blood. It sent him into a state of panic once again. Just then a katana came into his site. His eyes moved up the blade to its owner a long black haired man, with cold purple eyes.

"Listen here, do not escape...Show your back and I'll cut you down." Snow fell as the boy looked at the man with shock, but something else was hidden beneath the brown depths; admiration? The cat cocked her head trying to decipher it, but at the same time suppressing an urge to cackle; if a cat could that is. The feline was almost successful till the boy fell unconscious with a loud thud making the cat snicker along with green eyed man.

2. Chapter 2 (Edited)

Bright rays of sunlight woke the boy from his slumber, only to find that his hands were tied behind his back and in his mouth a ball of cloth to keep him from speaking. He began to struggle to free himself working up a sweat in his panic. He saw out the corner of his eye the same feline he tripped over last night sitting in the corner of the room. Its tail wrapped around its silver body; flicking up and down.

He recalled its name was Midnight. A weird name for a cat if he ever heard one. It watched him, mocking the boy, clearly enjoying his struggling and pathetic attempts to get free from his binding. He swore he heard it snicker at his misfortune before it lay down; head resting on its front paws as it closed its eyes. The boy stopped struggling and laid their motionless; he began to contemplate his current situation.

Where he was and what was whoever took him going to do with him; kill him? Just as his thoughts turned to more horrible things footsteps outside his door broke his train of thought and awoke the slumbering cat. The door slid open and in walked an older man with a kind face, he smiled at the feline that moved to greet him, rubbing its lithe body against his legs. The man glanced up from the cat seeing the

bound figure in the middle of the room wiped the smile off his face and he knelt beside him.

"Well, now you're awake? I'm sorry it's not right treating you this way."

The man flipped the covers over. He grimaced at the bindings and he started to undo them. The beast the boy now affectionately named inside his head let out a hiss of disapproval at the man's actions, but he didn't pay any attention to the feline as he continued his work on the ropes.

"Geez, that Souji."

The man sighed, shaking his head in exasperation. The beast seemed to perk up at the name. Its blue eyes filled with warmth; the first time he'd seen the look in its eyes he actually thought it was cute. His lips quirked up as much as they could while still having a ball of cloth stuffed into his mouth would allow him. The beast glowered at him when she saw the boy start to relax; its lips curled back and one white fang peeked out giving it an even more fearsome look for its tiny body and the boy realized he'd been staring at it with the look of wanting to pet it. Did he say cute? He meant vicious evil little creature from hell.

"Midnight, why don't you go wait in the meeting room with everyone else?"

Midnight eyed the boy, giving him a distrustful look before it purred at the man and strutted out of the room. Now free of his imprisonment he sat up, spitting out the ball of cloth in his mouth, he rubbed his throat before turning to the man.

"Um...Excuse me, could you tell me where I am? Just who are you?"

"Oh! Um...I'm sorry about that. I'm Genzaburou Inoue. This is the primary headquarters of the Shinsengumi."

"The Shinsengumi!?"

The boy cried out in shock; now he knew he was in trouble. The Mibu wolves; he'd heard rumors of them, and none of them were good ones at that.

"No need to be surprised. I'd like you to follow me please."

He nodded to Genzaburou and together they walked down the hall till they reached a door. Genzaburou smiled at the scared boy who was bound once again by a rope around his wrist. After a nod from the boy he slid the doors open. Inside were eight men, three of which were the men from last night along with the beast that sat curled up in the smirking green eyed man's lap. Its peaceful face marred by the same smirk.

"Good morning, did you sleep well? Looks like it. You have the marks of the tatami mat on your face."

The man teased as Midnight grinned maliciously. The boy grabbed his red face, did he really have tatami marks on his face? How

embarrassing.

"Stop it Souji, this is serious. There are no tatami marks on your face."

Saito explained, his face devoid of emotion. His cool blue eyes glanced at the cat before his eyes went back and watched the fidgeting boy. Souji and Midnight let out a sigh; their fun having ended.

"How cruel Hajime-Kun, you didn't have to say so,"

The boy stopped fidgeting and glared down at the mischievous duo. He couldn't believe the nerve of the man. Didn't he sense the tense atmosphere or was the atmosphere the reason he was making fun of him? Was he trying to lighten the mood? Souji shot him a look that told him it was clearly the opposite; he was just making fun of him to entertain himself and the beast.

"You two! This is no time for foolish prattle."

The man with long black hair and cold purple eyes sternly told Souji and Saito. He glared at them with such coldness the boy felt the room shift in temperature.

"Man, that things the witness. He's all tiny and thin. Dudes still just a kid, right?"

A boy who looked no older than him with long brown hair tied into a high ponytail and teal eyes questioned. His head was soon scrubbed by a buff brown haired man with blue eyes and a green bandanna wrapped around his forehead.

"You're in no position to call someone a kid, Heisuke." He laughed out loudly.

"Got that right. To the world at large, you're pretty much in the same boat squirt." A man with long red hair tied back and warm liquid gold eyes spoke up from beside the bandanna wearing man. He too teased the boy named Heisuke.

"Shut up! The old men should shut up." Heisuke retorted to the teasing men.

"What did you say, little kid?" The bandanna wearing man gripped Heisuke's head forcing his head down from the force while laughing.

"I don't remember allowing you to call me an old man. I can't speak for Shinpachi, but I'm not!" The red haired one spoke, smirking slightly as he jabbed at the brunette man.

"Are you betraying me, Sano?!" Shinpachi hollered back at the man named Sano.

Soon the three were in a quarrel; teasing comments and angry retorts flew as the room got livelier. The boy tried hard not to laugh at the scene, but a small chuckle escaped his mouth. One hate filled look from Midnight stifled any more sounds. He felt he could be dead in that second if it was possible.

"Stop it! The three of you!" The man with spiky black hair who sat beside the cold purple eyed man that threatened him last night right before he passed out, called out in an authoritative voice that made anyone who heard it quiet down and listen; which he noticed they all did.

"I apologize for this chatter and nonsense. Please, do not be afraid. Come, close that door and have a seat with us."

Another man this time with glasses told the boy. The door was shut and once he had sat down the authoritative man spoke up.

"I am Isami Kondou, commander of the Shinsengumi. Sannan-Kun here, is the deputy commander." Kondou motioned with his head to the bespectacled man.

"And Toshi is or rather Toshizou Hijikata is vice commander." He motioned to the man beside him, the one with the cold eyes, so that was his name. Somehow it fit him, the boy thought.

"Kondou-San, why are you telling this child all about us." Hijikata growled out, looking annoyed at the information that was being told to the child.

Kondou looked unsure.

"Is that bad?" He asked Hijikata, his brow furrowed in confusion.

"You're gonna interrogate the boy not ask him out to dinner." Shinpachi sighed out.

"Well now being earnest to a fault really is your style, isn't it Kondou-San?" Sano spoke earnestly, chuckling a bit at the Koundo-San's expense.

Kondou sheepishly coughed into his hand. "Well let's get down to it. First will you tell me again about last night's events Saito-Kun?"

Saito nodded to Kondou and proceeded to explain last night's events.

"Last night in town, two failed warriors encountered some rogue samurais on the street. A sword fight ensued, but we were able to settle things. This person witnessed the encounters that we had." The boy gasped and turned to Kondou.

"I didn't see anything at all!" He shouted with so much conviction that they had to believe him. He thought, even though it was a lie, it was the only way he could think to get out of this alive and find his father.

"Really?"

Heisuke asked as though he didn't believe the boy, and he did not. The boy felt hopeless and continued to insist on his innocence; desperation clear in his voice. But when Shinpachi said that he was aiding the rogue samurais he knew he had to change his story and tell

the truth before it was too late.

"That's not true; I was fleeing the rogue samurai, that's when the Shinsengumi members appeared. So I was the one that was helped."

Souji's smirk grew more as the boy finally spoke the truth. Lying wasn't getting him anywhere, but it did make for some great entertainment. Midnight's eyes glowed as she watched Souji. She flicked her tail and grinned at the boy. Oh, how she longed to be able to speak human. She would rip that runt a new one in no time, tell them how he fell, stepped, thrown, and sweet talked her like she was some stray cat that wanted attention from a stranger; as if. She wished to see him dead after he hurt her precious tail; it even looked a little crooked if you stared at it long enough.

"So, then you got a good look as the soldiers were killing those rogue samurai." Shinpachi stumped the boy with that accusation. His mouth was opened, but nothing came out. He screamed in his head to say something. Sano looked at the shaken boy.

"I can tell you've got an honest heart. You know, that's actually not a bad thing." Souji laughed at this moment drawing the attention of everyone in the room. The boy felt his body get colder at the laugh, something was wrong with it had the feeling of...Death.

"Come on, let's kill him. It's the best way to silence him." Souji chuckled out.

Souji was ready to cut down the kid at the given word. Midnight jumped out of his lap. She stretched her body out, making sure her claws gleamed in the light before sitting back and licking them. She caught the kid's eyes officially scaring him even more. The beast and Souji seemed to have wanting to kill him in common along with torturing him as much as possible.

"You can't!" He yelled his words seeming harder to leave his mouth, as his throat closed up.

"Don't say outrageous things. We can't go around rashly killing innocent people like that!" Kondou snapped at Souji who remained calm and answered him back.

"Please, don't make that face commander, I was just making a joke" Souji said just as calmly as he had when he voted to kill the boy, his smirk never leaving his face.

"Try to make a joke that actually sounds like one." Saitou unemotionally said as if he truly didn't care, but felt the need to jab at Souji.

"Believe me. I won't breathe a word of this to anyone, I promise that!"

The boy summoned up some courage and slammed his hands down on the floor. He gazed up at Kondou, in a last ditch effort. Hijikata, who this whole time had his eyes closed in deep thought, opened them to stare down at the pathetic runt.

"That's enough, leave us now child." Hijikata calmly said, not

looking at the boy.

The boy looked at him in wonder. Did he mean leave like leave the Shinsengumi and live or...? Saito stood up and grabbed him roughly by the arm. The boy cried out wanting one of them to help him, but none of them looked at him as he was dragged away. He'd even go as far as to beg for the help of the beast, but one look at that malicious cat that was being petted by Souji and he knew no help would come from it, only more scratches and possibly death if given a chance.

Saito dragged the squirming boy down the hall back to the room he woke up in. Saito slid open the door and threw him to the ground. The kid looked up at him with tears in his eyes, but the look in Saito's eyes stopped any words from leaving his mouth.

"For your own sake, I believe you should imagine the worst...Things are highly unlikely to go well."

The world stopped as those words were said. The sinking reminder came back, that all hope was lost and his life was now in the hands of those men and that cat; who could talk and kill so easily without a second thought.

3. Chapter 3 (Edited)

Chatter could be heard within the dining room in the Shinsengumi headquarters; Shinpachi and Heisuke arguing over who stole whose food. Souji, Saito and Gen watched with disinterested eyes, the later finally having enough scathingly reprimanded Shinpachi and Heisuke for fighting once again over food as well as mentioning Chizuru being uncomfortable. Chizuru laughed. Why did Gen-San have to bring her into it? She was grateful they let her live, and was even more grateful that the men decided to let her eat with them these last few weeks. She remembered what happened that day and how one man's decision changed her life...

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><p>"We're in the process of tracking Koudou-San's whereabouts ourselves. If you forget all that happened last night...You can stay under our protection until we are able to locate your father."
Hijikata spoke giving the final verdict after hours of back and forth arguing between him and the other captains.

"_Huh?" The words fell from her lips before she could stop them. Chizuru cocked her head inquisitively almost not believing their decision; she was sure they would kill her._

"_Do not worry child, the Shinsengumi will track down your father for sure. Have no fear." Kondou told her. The way he spoke was so kind and caring that Chizuru felt she could believe him and indeed she did._

* * *

><p>She softly smiled at the memory and she looked around the room fondly. These men said they would protect her and help find her father. She would do anything in her power to help them, but she didn't forget that any wrong move on her part and they would dispose

of her just as quickly as they let her live. She as well couldn't just think they would protect her from everything. Part of her still held that fear and the itch to run away, but she held fast. She needed to be strong for herself as well as her father. She noticed as she was looking that someone was missing besides, Hijikata-San and Sannan-San who were out on a mission.<p>

"Um...Where is the B-I mean Midnight?"

Chizuru caught herself before she used her nickname for Midnight. She looked at Okita for answers. He was the one that the beast seemed to be around twenty four seven. So, it was unusual that it wasn't with him or in the room in general; not that she was complaining. It still seemed to have a grudge against her.

Everyone stopped their eating and glanced around the room; looking for the feline, but with no sign of her their eyes rested on Souji. The said man looked as confused and dare she say, worried for a split second before it was gone without a trace and replaced with amusement.

"She's probably napping or killing something." He jokingly said, but Chizuru didn't know if she could believe it or not. She was sure the beast very well could kill someone and he wouldn't care.

"Souji she's a cat. She doesn't just randomly kill people like you want too." Saitou retorted back.

"Eh? But she is my cat. It's only natural for her to have that hobby" Souji cocked his head, smirking as if he knew what she was doing, but didn't want to tell anyone because it would ruin his fun.

"Souji she is everyone's cat, not only yours. Stop being possessive over her." Saitou once again played into Okita's hands. Chizuru wondered if he knew or not, but one look at the purple haired man told her. He was eating calmly as usual not sparing the teasing man a glance. He was simply conversing with him doing his own thing, but also allowing Souji to continue as he wants. She wondered if this was just how their friendship; if she could call it that; was like.

She just shook her head and thought about what Saitou said, about Midnight belonging to them all, she didn't necessarily believe that. It was true the cat was all of the Shinsengumi captains pet, but no one could deny it was more of Souji's then theirs. The affection and possessiveness was mutual between the man and cat, but sometimes they could both take it a bit too far. Chizuru gulped as she remembered just how possessive the beast can be...

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><p>It had only been a day since Chizuru was allowed to stay and already it seemed to put Midnight in a bad mood. A mood so foul anyone that if someone said or did anything seemingly small they were turned into a scratching post; unfortunately or fortunately for Midnight in her case, Chizuru was her first victim.

_Souji and Saito had just come back from their patrol covered in blood and they headed to the well to clean themselves up. Chizuru who was confined to her room watched out her window as the two men stripped off their kimonos to show only their chests; anymore and

she'd probably faint. Her eyes widened at the sight, drool dripped from the corner of her mouth. Realizing it she blushed and wiped it away, but never did her eyes stray from the wondrous view of muscle and nakedness._

She didn't notice Midnight in front of her window, but she felt it; the feeling as if she were burning in the pits of hell. Midnight glared at the awestruck girl, what was this mere pathetic runt of a questionable human doing looking at her men, specially her Souji? He was hers to look and do with as she pleased; this runt needed to be taught a lesson. Her possessive instincts kicked in and she launched herself at the girl pushing her back into her room and away from the window. The enraged feline scratched and bit at the girl's skin and clothes. Chizuru fought back as hard as she could by grabbing a hold of Midnight's fur and threw her across the room.

Midnight landed on all fours; panting. Chizuru and Midnight stared each other down willing the other to back down. Although Chizuru wanted to, she knew enough about animals to know if she backed down that would show she was lower than the cat therefore a servant and she didn't want to be that beast's servant. They circled each other, electricity flared between their eyes. Chizuru tried to keep eye contact while also looking for a way out of the room, but it was too late. The second she broke eye contact Midnight rammed into her again; sending them both into another cat fight.

_Outside Souji and Saitou were finishing up cleaning themselves when they heard the sound of conflict in Chizuru's room. Both rushed to the window to come upon a scene that stupefied Saitou while making Souji laugh his ass off. Chizuru was against her wall shuddering in fear for apparently no reason. Midnight had taken the time to escape from the room once she heard the footsteps coming towards them__.

__She was now watching from the cherry tree that was in the courtyard outside the room. Both men looked at Chizuru with mixed expressions. They heard a snicker from behind and turned to gaze up at Midnight. One guess could be made and both Saitou and Souji knew the answer, Midnight had to be the cause of Chizuru's injuries across her body. Saitou looked a bit angry and slightly irritated while Souji just looked as proud as can be._

"_Midnight..." Saitou began ready to reprimand the cat as well as punish her, but Souji put a hand up stopping Saitou's sentence. Saitou glanced at him stopping what he was doing he figured Souji was going to take charge, Midnight would listen to Souji better then him._

"_Good girl. See Hajime-Kun, she knows how to keep our prisoners well mannered."_

Saitou sighed. He felt a headache coming on so he let the matter go; looking once more at Chizuru he walked back to his clothes leaving the man and cat to snicker at the girls trembling figure.

* * *

><p>"Chizuru you okay? You suddenly turned pale are you getting sick?"<p>

"No um...I'm okay! Really just thinking that's all." she laughed to ease Heisuke's worried face, and it worked; he was back to smiling at

her in happy ignorance. Souji smirked at her knowingly just as he was about to tease her the sound of footsteps just outside the door sounded stopping him in his tracks. The door slid open and the first person to walk through the door was Hijikata; his face grim with grief and what appeared to be guilt.

"I've returned men." Hijikata spoke his voice mirroring his face.

Kondou and the others greeted him warmly, but they sensed something was amiss. Hijikata walked further into the room and following behind him was Sannan his left arm wrapped in a sling. Behind them both was Midnight, tail low and ears pulled back just sitting in the doorway watching Sannan. Seeing the shocked looks Sannan smiled.

"I'm fine. It's not as bad as it looks, so don't worry. Well then." Sannan-San spoke softly and a little bit tersely. He bowed his head slightly and started to walk out of the room he could hear Heisuke's voice follow him out.

"Sannan-San, what about dinner?" He inquired.

"Ah, I'll pass." Sannan-San stopped in the doorway of the room to answer his question, Midnight remained within the doorway right beside him; watching him.

"I'm a little tired. So, I'll go get some rest in my room." Sannan-San replied. He waited for Midnight to move as he shut the door softly allowing her time to go in or out. She choose out and stationed herself by his feet once more. He smiled gently down at her before staring hard at the door. He could hear their silence in the room, no doubt mulling over his sudden need to be alone, but he didn't let it bother him he was far too caught up in his own affairs.

Outside in the hallway Sannan held his arm in silence. The glow of bright blue eyes snapped him from his silence. He smiled down at the feline, but his smile soon faded when he noticed the emotions swirling in her eyes. The look wasn't the look of pity because that's the last thing he wanted from people and she understood that it seemed. He often wondered if the cat was even a cat as she was far too understanding of human ways not to mention she always seemed to know something, but never told. Not like she could, but he was sure if she could she wouldn't tell anyway; much like a certain captain. Sannan shook his head at her and uttered only a few words that sent chills down her spine before leaving her alone in the dark hallway.

"I will be fine. Soon I will be able to move this arm again, once I finish it." With that he walked off leaving Midnight to think about his words and dread filled her making her cold to the very core.

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><p>"Hijikata-San, what about Sannan-San's wound? How is it really?" Souji asked the question that was bothering all of them after Sannan-San's retreat. As Hijikata was about to answer them Midnight opened the door quietly with her paw and walked over to Souji. Midnight glanced over at Chizuru quickly assessing her before turning her attention back at Souji.<p>

Chizuru for a split second was lost in the cat's ocean deep eyes. So much emotion was swirling in them and all of which she'd never seen before. It choked her and for once she felt pity for the creature. The cat seemed to have more to it then she first thought. When eye contact was lost Chizuru watched as Midnight curled up in Souji's lap; her body not relaxing until she felt his hand rubbing her back comforting her.

"Midnight, did you know something happened to Sannan-San and stayed outside till they arrived?"

Souji whispered to the feline. The only answer he got was a simple nod and that was all he needed to know she'd answered him with a yes. He nodded down at her and scratched behind her ear once before he turned his attention back the matter at hand.

Hijikata noticed Chizuru out of the corner of his eye, he turned to her, and glared at the girl.

"What are you doing here?" His tone changed from grim to annoyance. "Who gave you permission to leave your room and eat here?" He asked Chizuru and all she could do was look down at the ground in slight fear as well as an ounce of guilt for accepting the men's invitation.

"Ah no, Toshi. Well, that was me..." Kondou tried to speak, but fumbled his words as he tried to think them over.

"I invited her. I told her "Let's eat together."" Heisuke jumped in smoothly with a bit of a frown on his face.

"No, it was me." Shinpachi pointed to himself after saying.

"No, it was actually me." Inoue spoke out slowly, flustered with the situation.

"It was me." Sano said relaxed as usual about it.

Hijikata was in shock at the exclamations. They were defending the prisoner. What were they thinking allowing her to dine with them? Just what happened in his absence that brought this about? Hijikata sighed.

"You guys, doing as you please..." Hijikata sighed out.

"What's the harm? I mean Chizuru hasn't tried to escape these last couple weeks." Heisuke wondered out loud. Hijikata glared at the boy clearly not liking the disobedience he was getting from any of them.

"It has only been a couple of weeks." He stated his earlier annoyance back in full force. Souji closed his eyes in exasperation his hand momentarily stopping the stroking of Midnight's fur.

"If you're that worried about her you should watch her around the clock. You be the babysitter for once." Souji spoke his voice laced with annoyance.

"What?" Hijikata asked his voice adopting a threatening tone. He

didn't like it when Souji challenged him, especially now. He glowered at Souji who just looked at him out the corner of his eye his signature smirk tugged his lips; his arms now rested on his knees trapping Midnight into him.

"But what do you think? Shall we at least let her eat here?" Kondou tried to soothe the tension by adverting Hijikata's attention away from Souji.

"Kondou-San...If you're so easygoing, the authority of the group will be in disarray." Hijikata said.

Kondou sheepishly rubbed the back of his neck not the least bit offended by Hijikata's words. Chizuru seeing an opportunity to say something on her behalf spoke up catching the entire room's attention.

"Uh um...It's not a problem. I'll just go back to my room now." Chizuru lifted herself up, picking up her tray along the way, but she only got halfway when Hijikata interrupted her.

"Stay where you are and eat." Chizuru froze; shocked that he was allowing her to eat with them after his arguments. Hijikata smiled slightly at the girl. She had guts that's for sure and she was willing to leave and not cause any issues between the men. He'd let her stay as long as she didn't start trouble.

"Well then, I shall eat too." He said leaving Chizuru staring at him in shock. While the chatter began to fill the room once more bringing the atmosphere to a much more cheerful mood there was still one who felt nothing, but dread and worry. Midnight watched as everyone conversed happily and while Souji tired feeding her some of his fish she refused. She didn't feel like eating right now. Sannan's condition worried her greatly and with what he spoke about just before leaving her presence it was even more unsettling, but there was nothing she could do about it, but wait and see how things turned out.

Midnight's attention was brought back with Chizuru's loud; "Yes!" The feline glared at the girl; blaming her for her lapse of thought. As if sensing the glare, the girl locked eyes with the cat and grew rigid. Quickly she adverted her eyes and looked down at her food. Midnight huffed out, that girl was trouble and she knew it.

4. Chapter 4

The sun was setting, basking the shinsengumi compound in its orange and red glow. In his darkening room, Sannan gazed down in contempt at the blade that rested in his hand. Lately he hasn't been himself and he knows that, but the thought of being worthless to the Shinsengumi made his insides turn cold. He felt lifeless. Dead.

The next morning he watched as Shinpachi's squad did their daily routine out in the yard, how he yearned to be able to handle a sword again. He started to drift away from his fellow comrades, suffering in silence every night he would practice with his one arm just to stop in frustration. He was irritated with himself for getting injured so carelessly, for having an injury that would change his life as a warrior.

Blue eyes watched him quietly from beside an open window from Chizuru's room. Both girl and cat looked upon scene, sadness evident. Neither said a word to each other or the man outside who did not know of their presence, the silent air around them spoke nothing to them. Chizuru and Midnight glanced at each other, no words needed saying; that look told them they both shared the same thought, that the Sannan they knew was dying.

* * *

><p>"Excuse me. I brought you your food" A voice announced outside his room, Sannan was once again at his desk looking over some notes. He tore his eyes from the paper long enough to spare the door a quick glance then went back to reading.<p>

"Thank you very much"

The door slid open to reveal Chizuru with a tray of food; she shuffled into the room and placed the tray down in the middle of the room. Chizuru's once happy mood darkened into sadness when she noted his hunched over form, he looked so vulnerable.

Sannan was surprised at her presence and made it known. "This is unusual for you to bring it in here, Yukimura-Kun" he smiled at her slightly but it never reached his eyes.

His eyes narrowed as she explain to him what she did to the food for him, his anger rising just a bit at how sympathetic she was being.

"Is this your idea of sympathy?"

"Huh?"

"I can't use my left hand at all so your simply making sure I don't spill my food clumsily while eating, is that it" Sannan stated more then asked already knowing the answer.

"Not at all" Chizuru disagreed with a shake of her head.

"If so you're wasting your time child" His voice betrayed his emotion, anger. His gaze cut down Chizuru and she was lost for words. Sannan continued his interrogation of her actions, bringing up Hijikata and the others snapped Chizuru out of her stupor and she found herself defended the men from the blame.

"No! I asked them to let me"

Sannan didn't look as if he believed her; he raised one eyebrow and turned back to his work ignoring the girl's presence, no longer wanting to hear anymore. But something was on his mind, something that gnawed at him, making him understand she wasn't doing this for himself only.

"I see it would sound like you're doing this for my sake only, but in the end you really want to make a place for yourself here, isn't that it?"

Chizuru looked down; she fought the tears that were threatening to

spill from her eyes. She didn't try to deny that fact, it was true after all.

"In any case please eat just a little, everyone really...They're really worried about you Sannan-San"

An eerie silence filled the room a few minutes later Chizuru bowed and excused herself from his room, sparing one last look at him she slid the door closed leaving the man inside to wallow in his own self-pity.

* * *

><p>Midnight was strolling around the compound; lately she hasn't been feeling the best. Sannan's wound and his recent seclusion from everyone had begun to weigh heavily on her mind. She was more sensitive to the emotions of her owners than some would believe.<p>

Midnight stopped herself from colliding with Chizuru who also seemed a bit down and lost in her own thoughts, the feline cocked one eyebrow.

"Meow"

Chizuru gasped not seeing Midnight sitting before her, she stilled herself awaiting the cat's fury that seemed to always happen whenever they met, but it never came. Chizuru slowly opened her eyes to see the smirking face of Midnight but it slowly dissipated into a sullen one. Chizuru let out a breath she didn't know she was holding and knelt down; she raised her hand towards Midnight's head and let it hover for a few minutes gauging the cat's reaction.

Midnight didn't practically like the girl all that much, still feeling as if she would take her masters away from her, but right now she needed the comfort from someone who felt the same way she did, she knew her owners did but they didn't exactly share her worry's to the same degree but it would seem this girl did. So she pushed her head up into her hand allowing the girl to softly caress her ears and head, midnight closed her eyes and let it go on for a few moments.

Midnight moved her head away from Chizuru's hand; she shook out her body, falling back into her normal attitude. She glared at the human and swiped at her hand before strutting around the corner. Chizuru let out a low chuckle not wanting the feline to hear her and give it a reason to attack her, she felt as if they got a little closer, as if midnight was giving her a chance to get to know her.

That was enough to bring Chizuru's good mood back if only just a bit, she smiled and continued on her way to see if she could go out on patrols with the men.

* * *

><p>Squad one of the shinsengumi left the HQ to make their rounds, with Chizuru in tow along with Midnight on Souji's shoulder. She questioned Souji about the feline coming with them but was only met with a glare from the mentioned cat and a simple "Because she can" from Souji. She wasn't completely satisfied with the answer but chose to let it go, today would be her first time outside of the

compound in months and she was looking forward to finding out more about her father's whereabouts.<p>

She asked around whenever she saw someone, but it was hard people would ignore her or when they saw her walking towards them they would turn the other way and go on with their business. Considering she was walking with the shinsengumi and they didn't have the best reputation, it didn't shock her all that much. But none the less she persevered until she finally came upon a man who said he's seen her father.

Chizuru ran to the place the old man pointed at a vendor store just a few yards away, Souji was about to follow her but was distracted by his squad getting into an argument with some Ronin. Midnight decided to follow the girl, if she didn't who knows what could happen.

Midnight trotted after Chizuru only stopping for a second when she noticed Yamazaki in a ridiculous outfit hiding and watching. Midnight's eye twitched at him, but went on her way as if she saw nothing. Chizuru entered the shop just as midnight got too her, she fell into step behind the girl wearily looking around the shop, she felt as if...Something was off.

"Excuse me"

"Yes what is it?"

"I would like to ask you a bit about..."

Chizuru was interrupted when she heard a man's voice say "That's the one". Midnight's fur was standing on end, she recognized Ronin when she saw them, her eyes narrowed at the group of men.

"That's the one that's always with those shinsengumi dogs!" The man unsheathed his katana and pointed it at Chizuru as did the man beside him, Midnight posed herself in front of the shaken girl, hissing and growling. The men ran towards the pair and midnight went into action she launched herself at the first one in front and bit his leg. Her teeth sunk and claws dug deeply into his flesh awarding her with a scream and the taste of fresh blood in her mouth. The man fell down to his knees at the sudden attack. Midnight quickly launched her body again towards the other man that was behind the first one but this one was ready for her.

"Damn cat!" He kicked out his foot hitting her right in the stomach sending her flying back.

Midnight hit the wall and slid down, her body engulfed in pain; she could hear Chizuru scream her name. She fought to pick herself up but her body collapsed due to the pain in her back, all she could do now was watch the girl and pray her master got there in time, she didn't want to help bury a body today.

Clash of metal on metal sounded and Midnight's attackers' katana was thrown out of his hands by none other than Souji.

"O-Okita-San!"

Chizuru was relieved to see him; Souji looked at her then at the body of midnight. Anger swelled within him seeing the cat still body, fearing for her life.

"Seems the only luck you got is bad" he smirked at his opponent, and then at Chizuru before he stepped back a bit to let his squad enter and attack. The Ronin fell quickly to the shinsengumi swords putting down their own weapons they surrendered all but the one Souji had disarmed, he grinned at him noticing Souji's eyes glance again towards the cat.

"The feline deserved what was coming to it, too bad I didn't stab it instead I bet red would look good on that pretty white fur"

Souji drew his katana up to meet the man's face, the metal glistening, "You touched her and now you die" Souji then plunged his katana into the man's heart, a wild smile stretching across his face.

* * *

><p>They were back at the HQ, having told Kondou of what occurred they were now in a meeting about the incident, Chizuru watched and listened as the men began to form a plan to attack Ikedaya Inn or Shikoku Inn where they figured the ChÅ•shÅ« would meet to come up with a plan B after one of their bosses were taken into custody.<p>

After the shinsengumi decided to split into two teams they began their march towards the locations, a night of blood and pain were sure to follow.

Midnight watched from her spot on the wall outside, her body was wrapped with bandages. She would have gone with them but Souji told her not to follow them, her injuries were too severe for him not to worry about her safety. She sullenly gazed at them fearing for their safety, hoping they would come back safe and sound. But then a sudden feeling came upon her, it ate away at her heart and left her cold, this feeling was one she was used to, one she knew.

She jumped down from the wall wincing when she felt her body pulsate in pain, she shook it off and ran out of the HQ. She headed towards the Ikedaya Inn, she knew something was gonna happen and she needed to be there when it did.

The moon illuminated her form, guiding her to the inn where she saw Kondou and the rest of his men stationed outside waiting. She ran into the inn and stationed herself on one of the ceiling beams, she crouched low so that none could see her and waited.

Out the corner of her eye she a man with blonde hair and a demonic aura was making his way to a room upstairs opposite of her. She narrowed her eyes to see dark figures moving inside behind the closed doors, her view was obstructed by red eyes they bore into her own blue orbs. She felt him searching through her, staring into her very soul, he must have found what he wanted because he smirked and quietly said

"I know what you are"

5. Chapter 5

Thank you for your reviews, masamune lover, Captaintsukiko34. They made me happy and I always love hearing from y'all! Makes me want to update faster for everyone that loves to read this, I can't explain how much I am feeling for all the faves and follows. I know it's such a small number to some but for me it's HUGE! So thank you everyone for your love and support.

I'll have chapter Four and Three edited by this week, so y'all wont have to deal with the horrible Grammar. I love y'all's reviews so please do so!

* * *

><p>Cold fear ran down Midnight's spine; making the fur on her back rise at the temperature drop. It wasn't long after that the red eyed demon left her presence in favor of the room with the dark figures. Midnight pushed the recent events to the back of her mind; to mull over later, for now she needed to do whatever she could to help her masters.<p>

"By the orders of the Aizu clan, the Shinsengumi, and by the imperial decree, we will restore the order here!"

It had begun. Midnight peered down to see Kondou's group arrive, but not with Hijikata's group or the Aizu domain's, and dread filled her heart. Blood spilled in buckets as bodies fell to the Shinsengumi swords while Midnight sat watching it all go down. Her eyes never left Souji's form as she watched him kill all those around him in an almost dance like fashion.

Midnight cringed as Kondou was surrounded, but he quickly dispatched them all. Shinpachi headed for one flight of the stairs while Souji and Heisuke went to another.

"There's only two of them don't hesitate, kill them!"

More reinforcements flooded the lower level as Midnight made her move, jumping from banister to banister. She quickly maneuvered her way to the room where the red-eyed devil went in. Opening the door slightly with her paw, she slipped into it and hid within the shadows. Her eyes were the only dead giveaway that she was there. She saw the red-eyed devil staring out the window at the bloodshed with an amused smirk marring his face. A red headed devil stood beside him, his blue eyes moved over her form silently, but did nothing more.

Within minutes, Midnight perked her ears to hear two set of footsteps running up the stairs and stop outside the room she was in. The door was suddenly thrown open and they enter; swords drawn.

* * *

><p>Hijikata and his group were stationed out at the Shikoku Inn. The air was still, but not suffocating as they waited for any sign of movement within the quiet inn. Footsteps echoed within the quiet night and they turned to see in the dark street a figure; small and frail. They soon realized it was Chizuru running towards them

frantically.<p>

"I have a message!" Chizuru yelled out to the group of men that stood idly waiting; shocked by her arrival. They turned to see Chizuru out of breathe, bent over as her face portrayed exhaustion, but she straightened herself "Ikedaya Inn!"

The men at once collected themselves and ran towards their destination with fear coursing in their veins. What if they didn't make it in time? What if they got their and everyone was dead? With those thoughts they quickened their pace.

* * *

><p>Midnight glared at the red-headed devil, who was facing Heisuke. Heisuke was thrown through the door and his head smacked against the floor hard; making him see stars for a few seconds. He struggled to recollect his thoughts and get back to his feet. Once he did, Heisuke lunged at the super human man with is his Katana raised to cut into his shoulder, but it was caught by the devil. The devil raised his foot and Heisuke braced himself for the impact of the kick in the stomach that sent him skidding back a bit before he was punched in the forehead with tremendous force; throwing his entire weight back into the wall and knocking him out cold.<p>

Midnight winced at the impact. She wanted to help, but Heisuke wouldn't forgive her for interfering; that and she needed to keep her presence unknown until the moment was right. Her attention was brought back to the main fight between Souji and the red-eyed devil. Souji sliced the air in front of him where his opponent once was, successfully cutting off a piece of blond hair, but not the head like he wanted. Souji sliced downwards for a shoulder hit, but his katana was blocked by the devils black sheath. Souji jumped back and waited for the real fight to begin, brandishing sword to sword.

Unsheathing his katana, the devil let the moonlight reflect off the cold steel; giving an ominous feeling to the other occupants.

"Maybe your worth sinking my teeth into."

"Let your guard down and you'll find those teeth being knocked out of your mouth, if you're not careful."

Souji attacked the devil as Midnight steeled herself from lashing out. So far Souji was handling himself just fine, no need for her to interfere, but she wasn't sure how long that would last. And with the girls arrival into the room that sped it up. Chizuru looked at the scene in front of her. Souji was exhausted, sweat beaded on his forehead dripping down his face, blood stained his clothes, and his opponent stood with an almost regal stance; a menacing smirk formed on his face. He was clearly enjoying the fun he was having.

Midnight hissed at the girl's intrusion. Their presence went unnoticed by the men. Souji's katana met the devils before he retreated back to avoid a cut to his shoulder, but was unsuccessful. He lunged again his katana meeting his opponents in a deadly clash. It was at this moment Midnight knew she had to intervene.

"Midnight!" Chizuru yelled out the cat's name, but did nothing to

stop her. Midnight let out a surge of power making the devil look at her. Blue met red and for a second they were lost in each other's gaze. Reading the others thoughts without a single word being exchanged; the threat was evident in her glowing blue irises and the devil's smirk grew.

He pushed his weight into Souji, making him reel back as he was then slammed in the chest by the demon's shoulder, causing him to stumble back into the wall cough up blood.

"Okita-San!"

Chizuru ran to his side worried about his condition. The devil for the first time noticed the small girl and he raised his katana to meet Chizuru's gaze.

"Your another one of his comrades. If you interfere, I'll have to kill you too little one."

Midnight tensed up, she had enough of his smart attitude, his threats, and finally what he just did to her master. She could feel her power surging through her veins, the heat inclosing around her body making her fur stand up and sizzle. Her blue eyes glowed brighter than before as if they were made up of molten lava. The devil stepped back eying the fiery feline.

"Are you really willing use your power to save these mere humans? Wasn't it humans that made you the way you are now?"

His words cut through her, making the fire in her blood cool down just a bit. Her mind went back to memories of past; humans running from her, humans hunting her, humans...Humans... Midnight's body shook with rage but she didn't budge an inch regardless of what happened in the past. She was here now and she had humans that cared for her; it was different from back then and it wouldn't happen again.

She leveled him with her gaze once more, standing up taller and straighter; making her look bigger, fiercer than usual. She wasn't going to give in, not to him, and allow him to ruin all the hard work she did, and certainly not to anyone that dared injure her Souji. She would kill him one way or another; her resolve was made.

6. Chapter 6

Thank you for the reviews **Lizziecats, Kisaki, Anime Hotty Lover 18, and Captaintsukiko64**! For ya'lls reviews it makes me so damn happy! And too al those favorites and alerts thank you guys too.

* * *

><p>Tendrils of black blue flame licked at Midnight's paws, they moved around her small body in a harmonious dance, before shooting out towards the devil. He evaded the flames successfully weaving from side to side, backwards and forwards trying to close the distance between him and the engaged feline. One flame finally made contact with his left ankle, it wrapped around it loosely he shook himself free of the seemingly fragile flame but noted it burned his flesh making him grunt lowly at not the pain but the sight of the

blackened, flesh peeling off sight.<p>

He glared at Midnight behind the wall of flame that circled her half of the room keeping him at bay, he mulled over his options, going through everything he learned in the few minutes of standoff, the wisps of flames though had strength in numbers and moved considerably at the same speed as him, were frail and if they didn't get a good enough hold on their target they could be shaken off easily.

But the damaged would already be down to the victim by the time they even freed themselves. A burn that pained anyone so greatly it would affect any ability or movement in battle, luckily for him he was an oni he could take much more pain in stride then any mere human could. He watched the flames for any sign of it rearing to attack but no such attack came, instead the male human moved.

"Midnight what the hell are you doing?! Get out of here now!"

Souji struggled to get up, throwing off the arm that Chizuru had around his shoulder. What was happening was too bizarre for him to figure out, not that he was trying to that could wait for a better time and place, preferably one that didn't have him hurt and being protected by a girl and a cat. Souji drew his katana in front of him moving Chizuru behind him, thankful the girl didn't protest or fight him or he'd have to knock her out and he didn't feel like exerting himself just to do that.

He carefully inched his way to midnight being weary of the flames. They danced around him allowing him access as he walked through them, the flames would dissipate into smoke and reform itself.

Souji placed his left hand on midnights head as he passed her, drawing her attention for split second, her blue irises were swirling with subdued anger. Her eyes widened a fraction when Souji's feet rested in front of her, she figured he would have kept himself behind the wall of smothering fire allowing her to protect him, it was the most intelligent thing to do, when bullet fly at you do you stand out in the open to get shot or do you chose to hide behind some sort of wall, the obviously choice would be the latter. But Souji's rashness always won over his intelligence any day no matter the situation.

"How foolish. In such a condition, you can't even serve as a shield now. The feline is more of an opponent then you are"

The devil smirked mockingly at him, daring Souji to make a move by insulting him, Midnights anger reached its boiling point three flames tangled together to form one large on, it shot out to strike the devil in between his eyes but the sneaky bastard maneuvered out of the way by stepping to the side, the flame double backed and snatched hand that held his katana in its fiery grip. The devil s face didn't change but one look in his eyes showed the suffocating hatred and surprise. He stood his ground not pulling away from the grip; the sound of his flesh being heated and melting was followed by a rancid smell that had him crinkling his nose.

"Meow~"

Midnight purred in satisfaction when she heard that delightful sound, it meant she was victorious in her attack, despite the tension in the

room and the dead below Souji chuckled. Souji smirked devilishly and decided he would follow up Midnight's attack with his own, better to end him now while he was in pain than to wait for him to recover.

Chizuru rushed at Souji once she saw his feet lift up, she held him back by grabbing a hold of his Haori, Midnight helped the girl, and her flames caressed Souji's legs, gently but firmly holding him to the ground.

"Stop! You are bleeding!"

"Meowrrgh"

The devil let out a short laugh at the man's failed attempts at skewering him, the rope of flame around his wrist, fell away breaking into small bits of flares before reforming back by Midnight's side. The devil sheathed his katana and stepped back, a confused look crossed Souji's and Midnight's faces.

"What are you planning?"

"My task ended when you broke in here."

As her master and the bastard exchanged words, Midnight with her acute hearing heard no more noise come from below them and when she looked out the window she saw no one, Chizuru looked around questioningly she felt something was different now than before but she couldn't pin point what it was, her gaze settled on Midnight and the feline only gave her a dead-panned look and a short nod. Their attention raced back to Souji when he moved towards their enemy,

"Wait!"

Souji stumbled and fell down, he protested his body's actions and urged it to move but his body too sore and tired and denied him his wish. Chizuru and Midnight rushed to his side, being careful not to aggravate his wounds anymore than what was already done by himself.

"Dammit...I...I can still...Fight..."

Souji's breathing became shallow as he fought to stay awake, his emerald eyes dulling and darkness soon engulfed his vision. The devil spared one last look at the unconscious man then to the Mysterious looking girl, and finally to the feline his glance remained on her longer than necessary. He leaped out of the window leaving the three alone in the room to fix the damage that was done.

"Okita-San! Okita-San!"

* * *

><p>Sunlight poured into the open window, bathing Midnight's silver fur in its warm glow. But it did nothing to warm her freezing heart or her worries as she stared down at her master where she sat to the left of Chizuru. The flames had receded into her body and her once fiery fur was now back to its original state, which Chizuru was thankful for.<p>

The fight had ended, twenty of the rounin dead, seven arrested and four injured. Though they were outnumbered, the shinsengumi had earned a remarkable victory, damage was done to their forces as well, one was dead and two heavily wounded. Two of their captains had also sustained major injuries, making their hard earned victory sour.

Chizuru and Midnight hadn't left Souji's side since he fell unconscious, they both awaited his awakening but he never did. Chizuru looked far worse than Midnight. But she couldn't tell with the poker face on the feline. Question after question fled through her mind and without realizing it she spoke it out loud.

"Okita-San...Why did you protect me? You always said that you would kill me if I ever got in the way."

Souji cracked his eyes open, he was awake the whole time, having woken up not too long ago and simply decided to rest his eyes. He looked at the girl with confusion in his eyes, he didn't know the answer to that question and it was bugging him. He was always aware of what he did, but this time he didn't know why he protected he hoped he'd figure it out soon, he never did like being in the dark.

He smirked and chuckled just enough to make the girls face soften and her worries lessen, he answered her truthfully.

"Now that you mention it...I wonder why..."

The pain took him again in its icy embrace, his eyes closed and he let out soft grunts, Midnight curled herself into the juncture of his neck, she licked his cheek softly cleaning off the blood. Souji smiled faintly at the treatment the cat always did know how to make him feel better. Midnight purred and let the vibrations that her body was making lull him to a peaceful but slightly troubled sleep. Both Chizuru and Midnight remained silent, watching the man as he slept.

* * *

><p>Shortly after men came to get Souji, once he was moved out of the Inn the shinsengumi marched to their HQ, throw the throes of towns people who were mortified and scared at the very scene before them none dared be in their way. Midnight rode atop the wooden stretcher that Souji was laid upon, her glare frightening all those who received it.<p>

7. Chapter 7

I'd like to thank xXAnimeLoverpotterhead4lifeXx , abuseKisaki, Kisaki, Captaintsukiko34! For the reviews they really do help me write. I admit I was a little lazy writing since i've moved to GA for a bit i've been getting use to things, and finding the urge to write is so far away. But I did it! Enjoy~

* * *

><p>White ears twitched lightly; blue eyes watched the two small birds chirping away outside the open doors of the meeting room intently. The figure readied itself to jump, her hind legs rose up, tail standing straight up and ears pulled back for max flight. She wiggled once, twice, three times; just as she went to leap a hand came down on her head stopping her in her tracks.<p>

"Midnight don't, you should be resting your wounds...Damn cat."

Midnight opened her eyes, which closed when the hand came down, and she gazed up at Hijikata with an innocent look. He gave her a stern look; his attention was directed to the doors that slid open to reveal Chizuru with a tray of tea and small triangle white paper. She walked to the outer edge and sat beside Sannan, as she placed one folded white paper along with a cup of tea down in front of him.

"Here is your medicine and tea, Sannan-San" He looked at her with surprise on his face,

"Do I have to drink it too? The Wound on my left arm has closed."

Chizuru softly smiled and tilted her head she answered him calmly and sweetly, "But Hijikata-San said to send it to you, Sannan-San"

He turned to Hijikata slowly feeling the intense glare on him; Souji who sat beside him spoke up in a lively tone, "Sannan-San, give it up."

He then poured the substance down his throat; immediately taking a large gulp of the tea afterwards as his face contorted in disgust.

"If you say it's the vice-Commander's orders..."

Sannan smiled knowing he lost this battle he picked up the medicine and much like Souji downed it in one go, unlike Souji there was no hint of disgust.

"Is this medication specially prepared?"

Chizuru asked the men present; she spoke the name Ishida's under her breath wondering who made it and how much it truly did help the injured. Her father never used it...

"Ishida's? Well, it is indeed special"

It was Sanosuke who answered her.

"Ishida's powdered medicine?"

Souji piped up, "They make it at Hijikata-San's house"

"Yes! No matter what cuts, bruises or pain you have, Ishida's powdered medicine will fix you up right away!"

Heisuke with his head bandaged did a little show of throwing his arm out and up in the air with the medicine packet in his hand, he

lowered it back to the front of him showing Chizuru.

"Drink, and you'll believe! I don't know whether it's true, though..."

He struck a pose his left arm held the medicine up above his mouth; he let it slowly trickle down his throat. He cringed in repulsion his body hunched over, he groaned.

"Arg, it's awful!"

Heisuke continued on grumbling about the awful tasting medicine until he felt the cold fury directed towards him. Hijikata held his fist to his face ready to give Heisuke more wounds to go with the one he had already.

"Should we try it out?"

"No! G-Give me a break, it's not funny if I get any more wounds."

Laughter erupted, as this was going on, Souji was mixing another packet of medicine in his leftover cup of tea. He chuckled before putting down in front of his favorite cat; his only cat but still favorite none the less.

Midnight looked at it then at him then back at the murky liquid as if to say "What the hell you want me to do with it, surely not drink it?"

He gave her one of his half smiled knowing she'd cave in and do as he wanted, and she did but not before huffing at him. Her injuries were not severe; a bruise on her side from being kicked against a wall, but he noticed since the fight at Ikedaya inn she had been more exhausted and drained of emotion almost. Midnight not noticing her master's change in thought, licked the surface of the tea tentatively, pulling back her paw swiped at her nose, it smelt horrible and it tasted just as bad, too bitter for her sensitive tongue...

Souji watched in amusement as she forced herself to drink enough to satisfy him, she would peek over at him every few licks hoping he would say she could stop, no such look came. She finished the medicine mixture her throat burned and her eyes felt sleepy, she fell over on her side looking deader than most humans could manage. She felt Souji petting her head and whispering "Good job" to her, hearing his loving words she let herself drift off.

"Nevertheless, it's unbelievable that Okita-Kun and Todo-Kun could be given such wounds."

Souji tuned in when he heard Inoue speak about his 'failure' his expression quickly changed to anger and hate, he lowered his head his bangs covering his dull eyes, his hand momentarily halted petting Midnight.

"The next time we meet, I shall be the one to win." His voice was absolute, he wouldn't fall again.

"They said they weren't from the Choushu."

"Yeah"

"But, that day they should have been fleeing some people from Ikeda."

"Which means...?"

"They could be spies from another group who had infiltrated for some purpose."

Midnight cracked an eye open; she was asleep only until the petting treatment stopped, hearing Saito say that she thought back to what she knew about the demon. He was from the Kazama family a prestigious pure-blooded clan from the west. She however didn't know his reasons for even being here in Kyoto, let alone if they were or not involved with the Choushu. She knew of his family pressuring him to search for a mate but she always thought he would stay away from Kyoto seems her intuition was false for the first time.

8. Chapter 8

xXAnimeLoverpotterhead4lifeXx

>Lol thank you! I tend to update every month, I'm trying to update more regularly but...Eh not going so good. I'm glad you like her I was afraid people wouldn't, it makes me happy to hear you say that! Yea she is lucky as hell to be around Souji, sigh I'm jealous of her.<p>

Anime hotty lover.18

>Lol another person says she's lucky to be around Souji, yea she is smart, smarter then me it seems .<p>

Captaintsukiko34

>Thank you!<p>

Enjoy everyone!

* * *

><p>Leaving the men inside to continue conversing alone, Chizuru walked down the corridor to the kitchen. She heard footsteps catching up to her; she turned around to notice Souji walking almost at a lazy pace towards her. She looked around for any sign of the others or Midnight but she and he were alone, she felt cold sweat start, he could make good on his promises of death...<p>

"O-Okita-san why aren't you with the others?"

Souji smirked down at her, he stood a few inches away enough to feel his body heat and his breath fan across her face. Her brown eyes widened as she took in his features up close, he was handsome almost god like. His green eyes pierced through her, she grew more uneasy waiting for him to speak or make any sudden movement towards his blade.

"Chizuru-Chan you weren't planning on telling Hijikata-San and the others about what happened at the Ikedaya Inn with Midnight were you?"

Chizuru stiffened she had thought about it, when they were re-telling what had gone down. Souji had told them about Midnights involvement but he failed to specify exactly what she had done, even Chizuru didn't know exactly what happened. All this while she could feel Souji's eyes becoming more and more uncomfortable to be looked at by; she tentatively raised her head.

"Um...Well you didn't tell them about what Midnight did I thought it would be best to. They have a right to know." Chizuru stammered out.

Souji leaned back on his heels, his smirk still present, but there was a noticeable hint of malice. Her body grew colder, maybe she shouldn't have said anything he looked ready to kill her no doubt.

"They don't need to know about anything, Midnight is my cat, she's my responsibility not anyone else's. Plus I already knew about Midnights mysterious powers, so you have nothing to worry about Chizuru-Chan~"

"B-But! That's not right! Your saying you knew about her and you never told anyone, how is that right? What if she harmed someone, would you look the other way, cover it up as an accident, lie and lie until they don't trust you anymore once they find out!?" Chizuru yelled.

She was frustrated at Souji's lack of concern about the future or anything to do with Midnight. She huffed, she would have crossed her arms, but with the tray in her hands it made it impossible. She looked up at Souji defiance written all over her face, but her resolve fell fast when she saw the fire in his eyes. His body told her he was in shock that she told him off, but his eyes spoke another story.

He glared fiercely at her making her body shake involuntarily; she felt her knees almost give out, but she stood strong until he moved. He was too quick for her to catch, and closed the distance between them. She stumbled back trying to get away from the angry man. She tripped over her own feet; the tray left her hands, it hit the floor with a loud clang, and the cups broke upon impact.

Chizuru looked dumbly at the floor then back to Souji who towered over her menacingly. His hand was on his blade and he looked ready to unsheathe it; it made her heart beat fast and her stomach drop.

"I'll kill you, if you say anything got it. Speak out again to me and I won't still my hand, Chizuru-Chan~"

Souji threatened her with the utmost seriousness; she knew she couldn't make that mistake ever again. She watched Souji's back as he walked away; his footsteps mirrored his anger as he stomped off. Only when he turned the corner did Chizuru fall to her knees; she rubbed her eyes to wipe the tears that built up. She started picking up the broken pieces of cups with cloudy eyes, careful not to prick herself. She picked up the last piece and made her way back to the kitchen.

"Hey, go along with Harada on patrol today."

She turned around at the sound of Hijikata's voice; she fought back a blush as she gazed upon him. She was confused at the order,

"But I'm not supposed to follow the patrol today." Chizuru said, Hijikata's emotionless face didn't change any as he replied to her, "Be quiet and just go."

"Um..." Chizuru froze, she fought between telling him of Okita-san's behavior towards her and about Midnight, but she also knew if he found out she told Hijikata-San he'd make good on his promise. Ultimately fear won over.

"What is it now?"

Chizuru shook her head, "Nothing, I'll do as you ask."

He nodded and left her alone after that, Chizuru sighed and resumed her original trek; _'First Okita-san's threat and now Hijikata-San' order...What am I going to do? Once I think everything is going good, that this is my home something happens and I'm back to fearing for my life again, oh father where are you?'"_

* * *

><p>After his talk with Chizuru, Souji began his search for Midnight. He had walked back to the meeting room and peeked in, but there was no sign of the feline amongst the remaining captains. He continued the search and soon found himself in the back; a cherry blossom tree swayed with the breeze. He sat down on the steps his elbows resting on his knees; his hands cradled his face as he leaned on them. He let out a frustrated sigh; his search for Midnight failed, the cat could be such a pain to find when she wanted to be.<p>

He frowned, he usually didn't question much unless it involved him, in which this case it did. He needed to speak to Midnight; though the cat couldn't speak back it would help him ease his mind somewhat.

Souji blinked up at the sun. He collapsed backwards his back hitting the floor, one hand covering his face; he watched the clouds go by lazily. No point in searching anymore, he'd just wander aimlessly for hours with no progress if he did. So he decided to lay down maybe take a nap to help time pass, Midnight would make her presence known whenever she felt like it. His eyes slowly fell closed and his breathing evened out, his sleep was restless, images of his defeat to the oni and Midnights strange powers flashed. He felt a weight on him and he slowly woke, sitting up he found a certain cat asleep in his lap.

He smiled softly and stroked her behind her ears, as he petted her he let loose of his thoughts that had been bugging him.

"Midnight, just what exactly are you?"

Midnight lovingly gazed up at him, her blue eyes glowed brighter than the sun for a few seconds a thin black flame like ring surrounded her pupil making it look like it was on fire before it receded and her eyes dulling back to their original color.

"You're not a normal cat obviously; sometimes I think you don't even know you're a cat besides the tail attached to your ass. If so then we're in the same boat, whatever you are it doesn't matter to me. Though I do wonder just how that oni bastard knew you, it was pretty damn obvious he knew what you are, I guess next time I see his ugly mug I need to question him, huh?"

Souji chuckled and continued, "You're my cat, my companion oddly you're the only one that seems to understand me. Whatever happens Midnight, stay by my side and I'll stay by yours and together we'll protect Kondou-San and the Shinsengumi with our lives."

Souji spoke, his voice wavered a few times during his speech, and he knew his emotions had returned when Midnight rubbed her face against his cheek. He petted her, his eyes locked with hers; they both wouldn't let anything happen to the Shinsengumi, if something did happen Souji didn't know what he would do, if he lost Kondou-San he didn't think he could move on.

Unknowns to him, Midnight knew exactly what she would do, she would remain by her masters side, if Kondou-San should fall she would not allow her master to fall with him as harsh as it sounded she would do even the most horrible, downright insane thing just to protect him and everyone else.

They both watched in silence as the cherry blossoms fell, somehow it seemed as if something had changed between them and whatever it was, it only made their bond stronger.

* * *

><p>We got a formal claim from the Aizu clan, in order to gain total control of the Choushu; we will be heading to the front"<p>

Awes rang through the room; the excitement could easily be felt. Sano made his know by yelling out what everyone was thinking, "That's great!"

Kondou nodded in Acknowledgment, he pinched his nose,

"The Aizu clan is acknowledging our work"

Kondou was overwhelmed at the sheer knowledge that after their hard work they were finally being acknowledged, it was a happy day indeed.

"Alright! This will be the Shinsengumi's gala!"

Heisuke bellowed out, his whole body shaking with untamed happiness, it was quickly extinguished by Shinpachi's comment, "What are you saying, Heisuke? You haven't recovered from your wounds. You're staying behind"

Heisuke looked at Shinpanchi in shock; he lowered his arms back to his sides before letting out a surprised Eh!

"It can't be..."

Heisuke looked heartbroken; a voice beside him jabbed at him,

"Yes, the injured ones have to stay at home~" Souji teased Heisuke, one eye closed he smirked at the long haired boy; clearly amused at his reaction to being left behind. Midnight chuckled at the scene she was watching from Souji's lap.

"That includes you too, Okita-Kun"

This time it was Souji turn to be shocked, both he and Heisuke looked at Sannan with disbelief, "And although I'm not happy about it, I too am included."

With that said there was no room for arguing, Souji and Heisuke let their heads drop and loud sighs fall out of their mouths, Midnight licked her master's chin in a comforting way, but nonetheless happy he was staying out of it. Chizuru laughed along with most in the room, but her laughter was cut short when she heard her name called by Kondou.

"Could you go with them?"

Before she could ask why, Heisuke spoke up with worry, "Chizuru?"

Everyone turned to her as the chief of the Shinsengumi continued speaking, "I'm not saying that you should fight. We need all the personnel we have, for messages and to care for the injured."

Once Kondou stopped, Hijikata spoke, "I won't force you decide on your own if you will go", his face was telling her to seriously think about what they were offering. "I..."

She looked around at everyone, all eyes were upon them, some had smiles on their faces encouraging her, others had grim looks marring their faces not at all liking the fact her going was offered in the first place, her gaze fell on the last pair of eyes, Midnight's. The cat didn't show a sign of any emotion to her, she couldn't figure out what the cat wanted or what it was thinking. But something told her Midnight was weary for her, it was just that feeling.

Chizuru looked down at the floor thinking strongly this decision could change her life somehow, but if she could be more helpful she will do anything, "If I can be of service, I will go"

She smiled with determination; Heisuke raised his fist and shouted, "Chizuru! Work hard on our behalf" Chizuru raised her fist in return and proclaimed "Yeah, I'll work hard!"

"You are not going to play" Sannan said darkly, his eyes narrowing at the girl, "Do try to refrain from being a hindrance to anyone"

Chizuru immediately fixed her eyes back to the floor, "Y-Yes" she stuttered out.

"Okay! Let's go for them!" Shinpachi's sudden outburst caused Sannan to stop his glaring giving Chizuru some relief, the men in the room all got to their feet and roared with Shinpachi. Everyone was raring to go, all except for the three that would remain, Heisuke, Souji and Sannan.

* * *

><p>Sannan walked out of the bustling room, his figure briskly making its way down the corridor. He stopped a ways away, he lifted his left arm up and glared fiercely down at it as he moved tried to clench and unclench his fingers, he could do it but with some difficulty. He turned away from his own hand, and closed his eyes in despair. Blue eyes watched the scene in sadness.<p>

* * *

><p>A lone wind chime floated on a chain, the wind making it dance, "Is something the matter, my lady?" a voice questioned from the shadows.<p>

"I feel the wind calling"

A girl with medium length hair tied with a yellow rope in two low pigtales on both sides of her face, she wore a yellow and green kimono with a purple shawl over her shoulders, her face was shrouded by the shadows of the room.

"The wind?"

She gazed outside with a restless expression, "The storm from 300 years ago may be returning" the women hidden within the shadows watched the other girl before saying. "Yes"

"Heed the winds direction for now"

"Understood, Milady...Did you hear about the indecent at Ikedaya Inn in Kyoto, apparently an oni from the Kazama clan came in contact with a cursed beast."

The girl turned a bit, this news apparently concerned her, she looked up at the sky from the window and spoke softly, "So she has returned; things have been set into motion just like 300 years ago..."

9. Chapter 9

Yay for finally updating! Anyway I had originally had chapter nine and ten together but my beta suggested splitting it so not to injure ya'lls eyes or mind with too much. So yes I am updating twice today so ya'll get ya fill and I will start working immediately on the next chapter, don't you worry! There is spoilers in this, you'll get more info on Midnight. I would also like to think ****wolfkibagirl69,**** ****Lady Kato,**** ****xXAnimeLoverpotterhead4lifeXx,**** ****Bloody Misaki,**** ****Captaintsukiko34** ****for the awesome reviews you guys made me work harder on these chapters!**

* * *

><p>In August a few months after Chizuru's arrival, the Shinsengumi received a request from the Aizu Domain asking for help. They set out to help them thwart the Choushu Domain's plans of infiltrating the Imperial Palace. Every member and captain set out; expect for a select few that stayed behind and guard the headquarters.<p>

Among the remaining soldiers, Heisuke, Souji with Midnight on his

shoulder, and Sannan were watching the army depart; the feeling of despair floated around the men and cat.

"I wanted to go too." Heisuke whined.

He turned away and huffed, but continued. "Standing by at the headquarters is way too boring."

Souji smirked at Heisuke; mentally agreeing with him while Sannan smiled. Midnight just gave him an exasperated look as if asking him 'Again?'

"At least you can return to the front lines once your wounds heal." Sannan spoke truthfully; his voice laced with despair. "In contrast, I..." Sannan's words drifted off.

Souji and Heisuke stared at him for a few seconds. Heisuke looked down in shame. "Well, we'll just have to be obedient and rest." Souji said distracting Sannan's attention away from his arm. Souji elbowed Heisuke in his ribs before taking off with Midnight snickering on his shoulder. Heisuke called out after them.

"What're you doing, Souji!?"

Sannan watched them with envy before closing his eyes._ 'If I use that drug, I may be able to wield a sword again'._

* * *

><p>Lounging in Souji's lap was Midnight; she was enjoying the peaceful afternoon but it soon turned into a weary and worrisome one. As the sun fell voices invaded her mind. 'The Choushu inside the Imperial Palace were killed.' soon after that it turned disturbing._ 'They have set fire to the palace!'_

Awhile later the voices stopped and Midnight grew worried; with all the information given to her she knew of all that transpired. What happened to the Shinsengumi? Kazama Chikage had shown up again this time with two other oni's; Shiranui Kyo and Kyuujyu Amagiri. Chizuru being injured by Kazama's sword and the wound healing within seconds. She knew everything all thanks to her fellow felines, but with all this knowledge all it did was make her job harder.

_ 'If that girl is the Yukimura heir then this won't be the last we've seen of Chikage...My job certainly has gotten that much harder since she's shown up. Then again it's my own damn fault for getting attached to humans again.'_

As she contemplated all that happened, she figured her best plan was to ask for help in keeping certain things in check; along with keeping her knowledge of events up to date. Her eyes glowed and she spoke to her allies.

_ 'Everyone...I need to ask you to do something for me again. Continue watching that Kazama brats whereabouts as well as his companions for me. If you can also find out about the Yukimura clan I need to know if anyone lived from their massacre and if so who. Get back to me once you do. I'll be waiting.'_

* * *

><p>A week later everyone returned back to the headquarters; two weeks had passed since then. Things have calmed down; the injured were back on their feet and back to patrolling and training. Midnight was making her own rounds. She checked many of the men to see if any had been slacking off or worse; pretending they were perfectly healed when they were not. She already caught a few men doing just that and they quickly returned back to the infirmary with Yamazaki when they felt her glare on them and saw the claws glistening in the light.<p>

As she passed by the meeting room she overheard a familiar voice question someone on the other side. "So, Itou-San will be joining the Shinsengumi?"

Another voice soon joined in. "He is a skilled swordsman and it seems that both you and Sannan-Kun acknowledged that."

This perked her interest. She wondered who they could be talking about. She put her paw on the sliding door and extended her claws to help. She inched it open slowly with some force on her part; no thumbs did make it harder. Once she had it opened enough to see in; her eyes rested on Heisuke, Hijikata, Kondou and Sannan.

She purred at the sight and ran in; immediately glomping Hijikata in his stomach. After mentioned man leaned back a little in shock, but as he gazed down at the cat his shock turned to annoyance. He glared down at the coy cat; it had no effect. Midnight continued to purr and rub her head into his stomach. Seeing a she was getting no attention from him she moved her entire body rubbing it all over his stomach. She ended up on her back; her front paws kneading the air in front of him and her tail swishing around lightly thumping his left thigh every few seconds.

The other three men present chuckled at the display of affection from the feline; having been cooped up and not been able to spend any time with the men the in the past weeks due to the Aizu clans help; she wanted to catch up and the best way to do that was completely interrupt anything they were trying to do and demand attention. Hijikata sighed in defeat. He rubbed her behind her ears; a trademark place for everyone one to go to. It was her soft spot.

"Souji spoils you too much." Hijikata muttered at the feline who was lost in pure bliss. She didn't even hear, nor care what he said at the moment; as long as he didn't stop. All the men laughed at that comment causing them to be on the receiving end of an icy glare. "Che, all of you spoil this cat too much!"

Kondou stopped laughing long enough to reply with. "Toshi, we all know you give Midnight as much attention as we do when alone."

All Hijikata could do was glower some more before he coughed and returned to the matter they had been discussing; before they were interrupted by the pesky cat.

Sannan looked at everyone and continued where they left off. "Yes, well Itou-San strongly believes in restoring power to the emperor will he be able to fit in with us? I'm not sure."

"As long as we explain our views to him; I'm sure he'll agree to help

us. Heisuke, you're from the same school as Itou-Sensei. So, I'll be counting on you to speak with him. As for myself, I'll be going to Edo." Kondou said with a smile lighting his face; optimism seemed to radiate off him.

Heisuke returned the feeling with a "Got it!" and pointed to himself. Not everyone shared their enthusiasm however. Sannan lowered his gaze deep in thought; he bore a look of sadness unseen by the two happy men in the room, but not to Hijikata. Said man eyed Sannan with apprehension and concern. Along with his gaze Midnight was watching him from her upside down position; her eyes mirrored Hijikata's.

* * *

><p>At the crack of dawn; Saito led his troops along with Chizuru through the remains of the city. The scene was horrible. Men, women and children dressed in torn and dirty clothes. They were starved, dehydrated and downright miserable. Kids that once ran and played with excitement and happiness now sat still like a dead body would. Chizuru watched all this with horrified eyes.<p>

"Excuse me, Saito-San!" Chizuru yelled out.

At the sound of his name being called he turned towards the girl in disguise; his scarf bellowing around his form. Buried deep inside his scarf was a ball of silver fur. Chizuru stopped in front of him and bowed her head.

"What is it?" Saito inquired.

Chizuru indicated with her head for him to look over at a group of men that were standing in front of a sign board.

"May I speak to the people over there for a moment? They might know some information about my father."

Saito nodded at her; telling her not to take too long; she walked over to them. The mass of fur inside Saito's scarf moved; one eye peeked out and regarded the figure walking away. Midnight shook herself free of her confines and jumped down; stretching her body out. She watched the girl talk to the group of men; most ignored her or gave her rude glares. Chizuru stepped back, but was persistent to ask if they have seen him; hoping they would answer her eventually.

One man spoke up. "Ma'am we haven't seen whoever you're looking for. We've been too busy trying to survive to care. Now go away!"

Chizuru withdraw her body away from the angered man; she stared at them frozen in shock. The people were never this mean to her; usually they would ignore her or tell her yes or no. But since the fire things have been going downhill; the people becoming desperate.

"Meow."

Hearing a cat behind her; she tensed up and made her way back to Saito and his group with Midnight at her heels. Chizuru looked down at her; since the Ikedaya inn incident Chizuru has been more fearful of the feline. Much like her master she could kill her whenever she

wished with little to no resistant. She had thought her and the feline were getting along, but then the cat turned a 360 and they were back to walking on thin ice. Likewise Midnight has been watching her more since she came back with Hijikata and the others. That in itself made Chizuru fear walking out at night alone for Midnight could attack her again like her first night.

Night fell quickly as they made their way back home; lanterns illuminated the dark streets giving it a slightly eerie feeling. Chizuru walked with her head down in the back of the group beside Saito and Midnight who was again in his scarf; curled up and asleep. Deep in thought Chizuru failed to notice Saito look at her in confusion that was hidden very well.

"Are you alright, Yukimura?" Saito questioned.

Chizuru snapped out of it and gazed up at Saito. "I'm fine." She answered back, but truthfully she wasn't. Saito's eyes told her he didn't believe her.

"Tell me if you feel unwell." Saito continued. "It'll be troublesome if you push yourself too hard and collapse." He spoke softly so no one would hear him expect Chizuru. The mentioned girl was shocked at his confession; even though he didn't say he would be concerned she felt as if he was hinting at something. She smiled, touched by what he said. She watched him continue walking. Her eye's met Midnight's and her smile slowly fell.

She lowered her head; breaking eye contact. She walked faster to get back beside Saito once again; matching his pace with some effort. she picked up her head when she didn't feel the cold, blue eyes watching her back anymore.

Midnight laid her head down after Chizuru passed; keeping an eye on her was getting tiresome, but it was needed. She was still weary of the child and even more so since hearing she might be an oni. True, she had softened a bit on her, but she wasn't starting to like her; no way! She reminded her of herself when she was younger; of course. So naive, so innocent, so easily take advantage of, believing and trusting in everyone so readily. It wasn't that simple, not like she had believed or like Chizuru still believed. She admitted she didn't want to watch the girl go downhill like she did; not down that same dark path she ran down.

These men though, they would help her grow, help her not lose her heart or innocence like; she had. She would face many hardships; she would probably come out of it less scathed and be happy in the end. Midnight figured if only she met them sooner in life. She would have been purer, more accepting. Of course, that was impossible considering none of them were alive back then. Midnight shook her head. She needed to stop thinking about the past. What's in the past stays in the past; or so she thought and hoped.

* * *

><p>The sun was just going down when dinner was served. All the captains were in the room; except Heisuke who had gone to Edo along with Kondou to help recruit. Chizuru, as usual, was serving tea to everyone. She was just about finished setting down the tea in front of Hijikata; when she noticed Sannan was missing. She looked around

the room until Souji answered her.<p>

"He's busy studying something."

Chizuru regarded him with curiosity; Midnight sat by his side. "I see. Then I prepared his tea a little too early. I've made too much."

Hijikata who was watching her went back to eating his food, "Just leave it there. Someone will drink it eventually. Better yet give it to the cat; might as well get rid of it." He told her.

"I see...Alright." Chizuru muttered and slowly inched her way to the mentioned feline. She sat the tea down watching wearily; ready to jump away once she felt teeth. But nothing happened. Midnight simply twitched her ears then lapped at the tea; purring to note her overall approval of its taste.

"Salty." Saito spoke from beside her; he was holding up a piece of vegetable with his chopsticks; regarding it with a touch of disgust.

"Whoa, this tastes bad!" Sano yelled out he too held a piece up staring at it as if it was a foreign being. "Souji prepared this dish, right?"

Souji glared at them. "What do you mean by that?"

He looked at his food in wonderment. "I'm only responsible for boiling the vegetables and soaking them in soy sauce."

While he was talking Souji set his bowl down in front of Midnight; who all, but happily took a piece of green vegetable and scarf it down to help her master out. She then promptly spat it out; hacking before dumping her whole muzzle into her tea. Everyone watched her; worried that she was going to keel over any second. Souji looked as if he just killed her. Midnight lifted her head up from the tea painfully; her taste buds wouldn't be the same for a while. Souji sighed at her; he petted her and tried a piece for himself.

"I think they taste just fine." It was the perfect seasoning for his taste buds; although he did notice that lately he was putting more seasoning into everything he was making. Maybe, He was coming down with a cold. Next thing everyone knew Saito had stood up taking his bowl with him.

"What's wrong, Saito?" Sano questioned him.

"I'm going to wash it with some water. Too much salt is bad for your health." Saito told him. He walked to the door and opened it; leaving it opened he left the room. Everyone stayed still for a few moments before they took initiative; starting with Sano. He looked from his food to Saito before getting up and saying.

"Me too."

Chizuru confusingly stared at the men as they all slowly left the room with their food; leaving her, Souji and Midnight alone. It didn't take long for Souji though.

"Well, I guess I'll do that too. Come on Midnight; I'll get you some milk to help wash the taste down." He picked up Midnight with his free hand. The cat lay limp in his arms; salt defiantly was not her preferred seasoning and Souji followed the others. He seemed a bit off with everything that was happening, but going along with it none the less.

Chizuru was alone and she had no clue what just happened; the poor thing.

* * *

><p>Walking down the corridor at night was Souji. He had Midnight at his heels; their destination was Sannan's room. Reaching the door; he waited for any sound. All he could hear was the swishing of some liquid; deciding now was as a good time as any he interrupted whatever was going on in the room.<p>

"Sannan-San, you're still awake?" Souji inquired; Midnight pawed at the door.

"Is that you, Okita-Kun?" Sannan inquired; surprised the man was still awake. "Come on in."

The door opened to reveal Souji with his famous smirk set on his face. Midnight sat by his feet her tail thumbing the floor; her eyes scrutinizing him.

"You're so dedicated, but it would be meaningless to ruin your health by researching." Souji said.

He closed the door behind him and Sannan turned to him to answer him. Midnight rubbed against the bifocaled man before settling herself in his lap.

"Don't worry. My health was ruined a long time ago. But take a look at this. I improved Ochimizu. Theoretically, this will neutralize its side effect." Sannan told him; his smile laced with a ting of sorrow and pride at his development.

Souji looked at him; his smirk wavering a bit, but it held strong. He sat down in front of Sannan. "Are you planning to give it a try? If you're confident, I won't stop you."

"I'm still considering what to do..." Sannan replied back letting his words trail off.

Souji chuckled a bit. "Well, if you fail, I'll kill you." He said.

"Now, that's a comfort." Sannan smiled at him; seeming happy with the answer Souji gave him. Midnight looked from Sannan to Souji then back to Sannan. She tilted her head and her eyes narrowed at him. She wasn't pleased with the conversation. She prayed to the gods that Sannan wouldn't take that extreme, but she knew if he did the gravity of the situation would call for Souji's promise.

"What about a glass of this instead?" Souji inquired as he held up the jug he brought with them; Midnight perked up at the sight of it.

"Rice wine? Now that should be better for your health." Sannan laughed.

Souji passed him a cup and then poured himself one; Midnight purred and rubbed herself against Souji's leg. _'It's been to long since I've tasted rice wine, hm give me some~'__

She kneaded her paws into Souji's thigh; her head inclined up towards his cup her nose pushing against it asking for a drink. Souji smiled and brought the cup towards her. Just as she went to lick it he quickly took it back and downed it in one gulp. He and Sannan laughed at the felines face; depression hit her hard and she fell down ungracefully in Souji's lap.

She pouted beginning to form a plan in her mind. _'I'll get you back master, one way or another'._

* * *

><p>Kondou stood outside shaking hands with a feminine male.
"Itou-Dono, we've been waiting for you."<p>

The man named Itou smiled. "I'm honored that the commander has come to personally welcome me."

Shinpachi, Saito, Sanosuke, and Souji stood a ways away watching from a distance the exchange between the two men. From the look on their faces; none of them like it at all.

"That man is Itou Kashitarou, an ittÅ•-ryu style master." Shinpachi explained to them.

"I've heard that he's a Sonnou Joui. I can hardly believe that he willingly joined the Shinsengumi." Saito spoke his mind; it seemed everyone else was in agreement by the nodding going on.

"I suppose this means that he holds the same beliefs as the Choushu. Will he be able to work well with us?" Sano questioned.

Just as they were speaking Sannan walked by with Midnight trotting a ways behind him; he overheard their conversation and stopped.

"Itou-San is a highly educated man as well as a persuasive speaker." Sannan told them; the men's heads swiveled to him. Sano looked down in thought.

"Oh? So, Sannan-San is acquainted with-" Sano lifted his head up to look at Sannan, but the man was already gone; leaving a depressed cat in his wake.

"Sannan-San is getting colder these days...Even Midnight is feeling the coldness from him."

The mentioned cat only shook her head and laid down; her head rested on her paws. She stared off into space where Sannan once was.

"Yeah, he hardly even says two words." Sano agreed. "Well, he's never been much of a talker."

Souji stared at the sky in thought; a blade of grass in between his lips. All he could think about is a feeling he just couldn't shake.

10. Chapter 10

Midnight was on the roof; listening to the talking going on in the room below her. Being an eavesdropper was easy for a cat; which she was thankful for. The men below her were currently conversing about Itou's arrival and how very skillful he was. She shuddered every time this Itou man spoke.

_'Could he get anymore girly?' _

Itou then started to butter up Hijikata and Sannan before Midnight heard Chizuru enter the room; things went quiet at her arrival. Not too long after that Midnight heard the door slid open again. She trotted over to the side of the roof, peered down and saw Chizuru walking out. The girl sat down by a basin of water and started submerging the used bottles in it. Midnight felt the air chill; her throat felt like it was closing; a sign something was going to happen. She watched as the girl continued her job; completely oblivious of the shadow that loomed over her figure.

"Hey, you." It spoke; Chizuru sat up quickly and looked at her visitor.

She hesitated in her response, but swallowed and answered the man standing in front of her. "How...May I help you?"

"I'm wondering why someone like you would be here." He told her; red lights went off in Midnight's head; it seemed their newest recruit just figured out the Shinsengumi's little secret or he was just being too damn curious. The feline quickly jumped down and ran towards the duo. She heard the door behind her open slowly; watching the scene, but not moving as she was.

"Huh?" Chizuru inquired; confusion written all over her face.

Itou walked towards her, "You're not a soldier, are you?" He moved in on her in a threatening manner. Chizuru took two steps back when he took one forward. She grew nervous; right when Itou cornered her a cat and a sword entered view.

The sword cut the air where Itou once was; said man having enough experience to dodge the blade before it took his head off. He also he avoided the claws that swiped at his legs from behind. Itou regarded the man in front of him; his right eye watched a cat come strutting up from behind him; it's eyes glowed in an unusual way, but it vanished before he could figure out what it looked like exactly.

"Okita-San! Midnight!" Chizuru yelled out.

Itou blinked. The smile on his face still present; he looked at the end of the sword that was still pointed directly at him. A red rose was balanced perfectly on the tip of the sword. Souji moved the blade closer to Itou offering the flower to him.

"A place for men is not a place for flowers, but as you've graced us with your presence Itou-San; I thought I'd give you something for the eyes." Souji said.

Itou picked the flower up off the blade and Souji retracted his blade, but didn't sheath it. Itou stared at the flower appreciating its beauty, "My, how beautiful. But isn't the sword a little too rough for this task?" Itou questioned.

Souji smirked; his eyes narrowing in amusement, "Controlled violence is one of the Tennen Rishin-Ryuu principles." With that Souji snapped his sword back into its sheath.

"You, hurry back and clear the rest of the dishes." Souji gave the girl a look that spoke volumes. Chizuru bowed and hurriedly ran off. Midnight watched her and once she was out of sight; she went back to glaring at Itou.

"Thank you for the flower, Okita-San." Itou thanked Souji and walked back to the room; as he passed by Souji and Midnight he whispered in the aforementioned man's ear.

"A cat also has no place in a place of men, does it not?" After he said that he left the man and cat alone.

Souji turned around; his face smiling, but his eyes spoke of death while Midnight's fur stood on edge. This Itou man was trouble and both loved the challenge of a hard kill.

* * *

><p>"I foresee a continued rise in the number of troops we have. We need to find a new base as soon as we can." Kondou spoke.<p>

Inside the meeting room everyone was present; a map of the compound was placed in front of them.

"It must be hard for our troops to sleep so tightly packed together." Shinpachi said.

"However, it won't be easy to find a place willing to take in the Shinsengumi. So do you have any ideas?" Souji spoke up from where he and Midnight were seated on his left.

Kondou coughed into his hand sheepishly, "If we did, we wouldn't need to discuss it."

"Nishi-Honganji Temple." Hijikata answered. Once those words left his mouth all heads snapped to look at him in shock.

"Nishi-Honganji Temple was the first Choushu safe house. They won't agree to take us in."

Sannan voiced his opinion on the matter, but Hijikata was quick to retort.

"That does not matter. The Choushu have always engaged in illegal activities under the guise of the temples and monks." He glared at the wall. "If it comes down to it; we'll force them to

agree."

Sannan was shocked beyond belief, "Aren't you ashamed to employ force to coerce monks?"

"Well, there is that. I agree with Sannan-San." Shinpachi said in agreement.

"While Toshi's points are valid, Sannan's opinion also needs to be considered." Kondou commented.

"Isn't Nishi-Honganji a nice place?" Kondou looked at him. "I've done some research as well and it seems a most suitable place for a barracks." Itou pulled something out of his kimono and slid it across the floor for all to see.

"As Hijikata-Kun has said, once we have a foothold in the temple; we can also defend against the Choushu." Itou finished.

"Indeed, the Choushu will lose a valuable safe house." Saito commented.

"Well, the monks won't be too pleased, but it would definitely be the best place to run operations." Sano agreed as well.

Shinpachi looked downcast, "I'm not too sure..." he agreed with Sannan that it may not be the best idea.

Kondou frowned; he rested his chin on his hand as he mulled everything said over. Before he could speak Sannan interrupted him.

"But if we act dishonorably; I fear there will be a downside to it!"

"Sannan-San is, as always, a man given to deep thoughts." Itou interrupted. "But to achieve great things we need to be bold and fearless in our planning. Still, I can understand why you are so cautious."

"Cautious?" Sannan questioned.

"I believe your left arm cannot be used?" Itou inquired. Midnight's ears folded back, the fur on her back rose along with her temper, and the others went rigid with disbelief.

Itou unaware or he simply didn't care continued. "Even if you can't be a swordsman; I'm sure that your intellect and talents in strategy will be an asset."

Midnight rose up at the jab towards Sannan and lunged at him. Souji was quick to grab her by her scruff and hold her down. She hissed and yowled at the man that insulted Sannan; the man simply smiled cockily at the feline and then looked back to Sannan; ignoring her. Seeing him ignore her; made her feel as if she was a useless speck of dust that he could just rub off and it made her see red. Her claws extended and her eyes began to glow. Souji tightened his hold and leaned down to whisper to her.

"Midnight calm down, your losing control and we wouldn't want the

others to know our little secret, now would we?" Hearing his words she calmed herself down.

'Now's not the time to show them, they're not ready yet.' _ Even though she was clam on the outside; on the inside she was a burning inferno. All the men watched the supposedly calm feline for a sign of her letting lose again. Itou was the only one not looking worried; a smirk was present on his face. He was clearly enjoying the scene he was witnessing.

Hijikata's voice rose above the commotion. "What did you mean by those words, Itou-San?" Though he wasn't yelling the tone demanded answers and for anyone within earshot to shut up and listen.

"As you said, Sannan-San is a fine scholar. But we, the Shinsengumi, value him as a swordsman!" Hijikata was losing his own hold on his anger.

Sannan though happy to hear those words had to be honest and face the truth of the situation. "Hijikata-Kun, my arm is..." He gripped his left arm.

"Ah, forgive my uncourteous words. Of course I too will be overjoyed when your arm has recovered." Itou said behind his hand; smirk still present. Glares from around the room hit Itou's figure. Souji who still held Midnight down with his hands went to lift them up; deciding just to let her kill him, but Saito's stares on his head made him tighten his hold and rethink his decision with a sigh.

"Well, there are many different opinions, but for the moment let's stick with Nishi-Honganji as planned." Kondou stated still shaken by the commotion. After that was said Sannan left the room.

"With the arrival of the elite it's time for the old guard to step down." He said forlornly to Chizuru who stood outside the door; obviously over hearing what went on and couldn't strengthen the courage to step into the room. With a heavy sigh Sannan walked away; his posture sluggish and sad.

* * *

><p>"Poor Sannan-San. Many of our members have been avoiding him lately." Sano commented aloud.<p>

He was currently outside with other captains; all present were thinking on Sannan's injury and how it changed him from who they knew and who they don't know.

Chizuru stood beside Shinpachi; utterly confused, but had some knowledge on why everyone was like this. From what she heard things hadn't gone so well with Itou-San and Sannan-San. She gave a questioning look at Sano. "Avoiding?"

"Well, he always wears that expression of his when he speaks to people." Shinpanchi answered her.

"They're all intimidated and afraid to get close to him." Sano continued.

"He was calm and gentle; at least on the surface." Shinpachi followed; Chizuru looked crestfallen.

"But inside, he's totally black." Sano stated.

"Yeah, black as night!" Shinpachi finished before both him and Sano started laughing, Chizuru could only blink at them.

"It'd be unbearable to not crack jokes." Chizuru turned to the voice beside her; Souji was sitting on the steps his sword cradled against his left shoulder.

"Talking about that Itou fellow; his words alone piss me off." Sano growled out softly.

"Trying to make an impression? Or does he really look down on everyone else?" Shinpachi inquired.

Souji stared hard at the ground, "I don't like him either, though I concede that he's well-versed in sword play." He said grudgingly.

"Annoying." Hijikata commented; speaking up for the first time.

"So, Hijikata-San, Send him away and tell him we don't need people like him." Souji told him.

"I don't think Kondou-San will agree to that. He respects Itou-San very much." Hijikata answered back.

"How useless. Isn't being nasty the duty of the demonic vice-captain?" Souji jabbed Hijikata using the officer's pet name for the man; to rile him up.

Hijikata's eye twitched successfully taking the bait. "Well Souji, you're welcome to the job."

Souji laughed at the mere thought of him taking the job. He knew, as did the others, they'd have less members if Souji took over. "No thanks. It's too much trouble." After he said that he sighed heavily losing his cheerfulness.

"Saito-San not able to deal with Itou-San either?" Chizuru asked the only male that hadn't given an opinion on the subject.

"It's this diversity of opinions that demonstrates the size of our organization, but if the variety of opinions is too large it may very well tear us apart from within." Saito said honestly.

* * *

><p>Midnight sat in front of a yard full of cats; night had come and it was time for the meeting. Half were watching her, while the other half were playing around. Midnight thumbed her tail twice on the floor calling for the yard to be quiet; at once all of their eyes were upon her awaiting her words.<p>

_'The reason I called you here today was rather simple. I asked a few of you to keep an eye out on some rather troublesome problems. I wish to tell you all exactly why I am asking this of you and to also tell

you to be aware that in future events I might ask all of you to help with lookout or in worse case become a shield._

I am not nor will I ever ask you to lay your lives down for humans. I know the variety of opinions in the matter of even helping those that destroyed us. But these men...Are different. They are so much more different from those that killed us, those that forced us away from our home and forced us into hiding.

So I will ask now. Will you help me protect these men for selfish reasons of my own? I will tell you now if you do not wish to be a part of this; go now I will not blame nor hate you for it.'

Midnight waited for the grass to become visible, but no such thing happened, instead all cats raised their heads and thumbed their tails three times signifying that they were all willing to be her servants; taking and doing anything she asked of them.

Hatred still lingered in their hearts for the humans, but no such hatred could ever stop them from helping their princess; their Midnight. If these humans meant the world to her and if they truly were different then maybe with their help humans and oni's could once again live together in peace.

Midnight's heart swelled with pride and happiness; to think all of them willingly helping her selfish desires. She couldn't be happier then she was at that moment.

"Sannan-San!" She heard a yell from somewhere within the compound. Midnight's happiness quickly dissipated and turned into dread and fear. That voice was Chizuru's and if she was yelling Sannan's name that must mean...No!

'Everyone leave, I will contact you some other time!'

At the command all felines scattered; some looked back at Midnight only to see her half way across the yard making her way to the source of the scream. Midnight hurried. She slipped and tumbled a few times down the halls; her body rammed against a wall she had slid into. She shook herself out of her stupor upon seeing the door open; she rushed in only to stop in her tracks.

Sannan was kneeling on the floor clutching his throat while Chizuru knelt over him repeatedly calling out to him. Midnight spotted a vile with a small amount of red liquid seeping out. Her heart dropped, her ears went back and she cautiously walked towards the two. Then it happened; Sannan's hair began to turn white and Midnight ran forward hissing.

Chizuru grew even more worried when she heard the hissing sound, but it did not come from Sannan it came from the feline that was running towards her.

"Huh? M-Midnight!?" Chizuru stammered.

The cat skidded in front of her; forcing the girl to move back, but it was too late. Sannan grabbed Chizuru by her neck pushing her to the floor; holding her down. Midnight stared in shock as Sannan rose slowly putting more pressure into his hold on the girls neck; Chizuru

helplessly tried to pry his hands away with no success.

Midnight couldn't take it any longer; the girl would be killed right in front of her and even though she didn't want to admit she had gotten use to her, but between her and Sannan it was a hard decision. She needed to act and do it fast. Her energy flared up and soon black fire surrounded her. The flames grew more intense with the power that flowed through her veins and out into her fire which grew even fiercer. Chizuru felt the heat, but it didn't burn her; only caressed her skin.

Midnight closed her eyes and concentrated; hoping she didn't hurt Sannan more then she needed too. She opened her eyes and at once the black flames shot towards him. They circled his hand around Chizuru's throat while the other flames grabbed his left arm and neck; all at once they erupted. The force caused Sannan's body to fly backwards into the wall.

Sannan groaned in pain; his blood red eyes struggled to stay open. His vision blurred the figure of Midnight with Chizuru next to her coughing; the flames retreated into Midnights body and just as his eyes closed he whispered.

"What...Are...You?"

* * *

><p>Enjoy review and comment I would appreciate it! Love ya'lls<p>

11. Chapter 11

Disclaimer: Haven't done this in awhile, Well let's start. I do NOT own Hakuouki/hakuoki if I did Souji would be mine, Chizuru would be hella cool and not stupid and My sisters would have their respective men.

* * *

><p>Chizuru breathed heavily and collapsed to the floor; her neck bleeding profusely before the wound closed up. She stared at Sannan's crumpled body on the floor then her sight moved to Midnight. The feline stood still, but her eyes were downcast in guilt and regret. At that moment Chizuru felt grateful to the cat.<p>

Midnight could have just let her die, but instead attacked one of her own masters that she loved dearly just to protect her. It made her heart swell with happiness, but it was gone the second her eyes met Midnight's. Anger swirled within the icy blue depths; anger at Chizuru and at herself.

Chizuru could almost hear the question burning in the feline's hues; _what the hell were you doing in here?_ Before Chizuru could answer they both heard loud footsteps outside running towards their current location and Chizuru's stomach dropped; what were the men going to do to her now?

"Sannan-San!" The door flew open seconds later and Hijikata ran in. He looked from Chizuru to Midnight confused as to why they were in

the warehouse then he looked towards the back of the room where the Rasetsu were going wild with blood lust. His gaze hardened when he spotted Sannan's body; hair still white as snow. He glared down at the floor then walked over to Chizuru; whom he grabbed and shook in rage.

"You! What the hell happened here!?" Hijikata felt something slick and wet on his right fingers which held the girl's shoulder. He pulled his hand back and looked at the blood.

"You..." Hijikata uttered. Chizuru turned her head away from him; eyes glistening with tears that she refused to let him see. While Chizuru kept her head to the floor Hijikata looked down at Midnight. His questioning look only served to make the feline more agitated. Her ears were flat against her head, tail slack, and her paws were scratching the floor beneath her. She lifted her eyes to meet Hijikata's, the raw emotion that he saw made him cringe slightly and curse under his breath.

Why did it seem that she and the girl were always in the mist of things; his confusion only served to make him angrier. He'd get the answers one way or another and since Midnight couldn't very well speak human he'd have to deal with the girl.

Their attention was disturbed by Souji and Saitou's arrival; both men looked at the scene and grimaced. Souji walked over to Midnight while Saitou went over to inspect Sannan; he stopped when his foot hit a bottle on the floor making it roll and the small amount of liquid that was left inside trickle out. Hijikata and Souji moved over to his side both glancing at the body then the vial.

A sharp meow reached their ears and all three men's heads whipped around just in time to see Chizuru's body go limp and crumple to the ground. Hijikata being the closest to the girl ran and caught her; he gently lowered her body down then stood up.

"Shinpachi, go to the gate of the Maekawa-Tei base. Harada, go to the Yagi-Tei base. Keep an eye on the troops. Don't let anyone else near this room." Hijikata ordered Shinpachi and Sano who arrived shortly after Souji and Saitou did, but stood at the door basking in the shadows; nodded and left to do as told.

Watching them leave Hijikata sighed, "Saitou, you'll stand by for orders in the courtyard and keep an eye on Itou and his men."

"Understood." Saitou replied leaving the room.

Souji glanced at Hijikata then back down at Sannan, "Hijikata-San, I'd like to stay here."

His statement left unheard words, but all who were left understood what was left unsaid. _Let me be the one to do it. _Midnight remembered the talk Souji and Sannan had a few days earlier.

"_Are you planning to give it a try? If you're confident, I won't stop you. Well if you fail, I'll make sure I kill you."_

When Souji said that she knew he just might have to and now it seemed that this was the moment. Coldness seeped through Midnight's body at

the mere thought of having to slay another comrade in arms; especially one such as Sannan who had been with them since the very beginning.

"Alright. This will be a critical night. Will he live or die, or will he self-destruct?" Hijikata shook his head at the depressing thoughts. He took one last fleeting look at Sannan-San before picking up Chizuru's body and walking out the door.

Souji and Midnight were the only ones left and as time went by neither spoke; or in Midnight's case meowed. Both reflected on their time with Sannan; neither wanting to end him, but knowing it might come to that.

"Midnight, come here girl." The feline's ears perked up only slightly she looked at Souji before slowly staggering to him; she collapsed in his arms. Souji patted her feeling her anguish and fear of the uncertainty of Sannan's life; both man and cat stayed like that as the horrid night went on.

* * *

><p>As the night continued Chizuru found herself in a very familiar position; back against the wall with a katana pointed directly at her face. Her eyes ran up the sword to the man that was holding it; his eyes held the same gaze as when she first met him.<p>

"What the hell are you? Your wound healed immediately, just like a furie." His eyes darted down to the injury on her neck; just as he said there was no sign that it was even cut into by a pair of claws besides the blood that still remained.

"Just like at Ikedaya Inn you and Midnight were in the middle of the situation again. So stop fucking around and tell me the truth." Hijikata barked with every intent on her answering him or else.

Chizuru looked crestfallen, but nodded not at all scared of the katana that posed a threat in front of her.

"I have known about this power since I was young. But my father taught me not to let others know. My father...Please let me find him." She looked up at him; her eyes glistening with unshed tears.

"I want to ask him about this power...And I want to know what kind of man he really is. I want to know the reason why he did the things he did, I beg you!" At the end of her speech she felt her voice shake with despair and desperation. She swallowed feeling her throat close up and she tried to stop the tears that threatened to fall.

Hijikata let out a sigh sheathing his katana. He looked down at the girl hearing her conviction made him feel almost guilty for threatening her life, but there was still one question left unanswered.

"Did Sannan-San see your power?" He asked fearing lightly what the answer could be. If Sannan had seen then things would get much more complicated, but he wasn't expecting what Chizuru said next.

"Not mine...But Midnight's."

12. Chapter 12

She didn't know what possessed her to say it; she figured she was done lying about and hiding everything. She knew she'd be in trouble with not only Souji, but Midnight as well; death would possibly await her, but she hoped, prayed Hijikata would keep her safe.

"What the fuck is that suppose to mean!?" If there was one thing Hijikata hated the most it was not knowing what was going on. Since when was Midnight the cat not an ordinary cat? What the hell was going on first? Sannan took the Ochimizu and now he found out Chizuru was an oni and Midnight was something.

"I-It's true! It happened at the Ikedaya inn too..." Chizuru swallowed sweat beaded down her face.

"Tell me everything." Hijikata said as he positioned himself to sit once again; his aggravation at an all new high.

* * *

><p>Chizuru saw Midnight tense up. She could feel the beast's power surging through the room; the heat swirling around the room made her body begin to sweat profusely. She lifted her hand up to wipe her forehead. She watched as Midnight's fur stood up and erupted in flames. Chizuru's eyes widened as she eyed the fiery feline in fear.

Tendrils of black blue flame licked at Midnight's paws. They moved around her small body in a harmonious dance, before shooting out towards the devil. Chizuru held her breath when he evaded the flames; successfully weaving from side to side, backwards and forwards trying to close the distance between him and Midnight. One flame finally made contact with his left ankle. It wrapped around it loosely, but the devil shook himself free. Chizuru could see that regardless of breaking free the skin that was held by the flame was burned and the sight of the blackened flesh peeling off made her stomach churn.

The devil glared at Midnight behind the wall of flame that circled her half of the room; keeping him at bay and her and everyone safe. Chizuru couldn't believe what was happening. To think this beast had this power. It made her more afraid for her life than ever before. Mindight was...Midnight was a true monster!

* * *

><p>Silence filled the room while Hijikata mulled over everything he had just learned. Sighing he got up prompting the girl to look up at him in confusion.<p>

"It's not that I trust you, but with all that you've told me about Midnight and yourself, I'll keep your secret. Don't let the others know about what you are and leave Midnight to me and the other captains; she's our responsibility. You make sure to keep your mouth shut and I won't break my word."

He opened the door and left through it. Closing the door; Hijikata stood rooted in place for a few seconds then began to move towards the room he left Souji and Midnight in. Something needed to be done about the cat, but since it involved her it involved everyone of the captains and more so Souji. He knew he couldn't just kill the feline; not unless he wanted a full out war between him and Souji and possibly the others who were attached to her as well. He felt it in his heart that he didn't know whether he could kill her or not if he needed to. He silently prayed it wouldn't come to that. But he needed answers and he needed them now.

* * *

><p>The night rose into morning and everyone was back in the meeting room. You could slice a katana through the amount of tension in the air. Chizuru was back to pouring everyone drinks and serving them amongst the captains that were present. Souji was missing along with Midnight per usual. Since last night she trailed his wake wherever he went; not much different than before, but the feline was more sluggish in her steps and Souji more tense.<p>

It made Chizuru wonder if Hijikata had spoken with the man and cat. She grew worried about their reaction to her spilling, but she dismissed the thought that Hijikata spoke to them because if he had she was sure Souji would have already tried to kill her while she was alone making tea. To her satisfaction when he passed by the kitchen earlier he didn't so much as glance her way. She knew though it was only a matter of time. Once word of Sannan-San's condition came out she was sure that would be the time when Hijikata discussed the feline.

Her jumbled mess of thoughts were interrupted when the doors to the room opened and Souji, who surprisingly looked happier then she's seen him in a night as well as Midnight who resumed her position on his shoulder. She too looked beyond ecstatic and that made Chizuru guilt worsen.

"Sannan-San appears to have passed the crisis." Souji exclaimed calmly but his tone was higher than usual betraying his calm face and giving away his happiness.

"He's sleeping quietly now." Inoue concluded him and Souji both picking a spot in the room and settled down. Inoue beside Kondou and Souji against the wall of the door he came through. Shinpachi spoke up at once.

"Then Sannan-San succeeded?"

Inoue shook his head. "We'll only know that for sure after he wakes up. Though by the looks of it, there's no difference from yesterday." As Inoue explained the situation at hand while inside Hijikata's mind something else raged on.

He watched Souji pet Midnight who now sitting in his lap; both were as happy and content as usual it saddened that this peace of theirs might not last for long now that he knew Sannan-San was going to be alright. That was one matter down; now to fix the other, but how? That question ran through the vice commanders mind; how to bring it up. He mulled over talking to Souji alone about it but figured it would most likely end in one of them injured or perhaps both. The

safest choice was to speak about the matter in front of the other captains in case of a fight breaking out; they could restrain Souji and himself.

Hijikata let out a quiet sigh just before another voice entered the fray; startling him.

"Good morning." Itou said cheerfully; standing in the open doorway. The majority of the captains jumped a bit, turning their attention to him. At that moment Souji coughed. He covered his mouth and turned away from a worried Midnight. He caught the attention of Sano.

"Are you alright, Souji?" he asked concerned.

Quickly recovering he smiled at the man. "Yeah, the air's a bit stale, so..." Before he could finish his sentence he was interrupted by Itou.

"Oh, it's such a refreshing morning, but everyone seems to be somewhat under the weather. It's got something to do with last night's commotion, right?" Itou sneakily slipped with his words.

Kondou immediately retorted with a simple. "Ah, no...That is..." at a loss for words the others tried to help their commander.

"Hey Sano, make something up." Shinpachi quietly whispered to Sano.

"Eh, me?" He asked his friend, obviously as shocked as everyone else that Itou knew about the incident; so shocked his brain couldn't come up with anything to say. Souji interrupted them at that moment saving the red head from certain embarrassment.

"It's all right. Leave these things to someone who's good at explanations." Souji smiled and looked at the only man that hadn't shown any sort of emotion during the commotion. Standing up Saitou approached Itou and spoke calmly but seriously.

"It's just as you said, Itou-San. An incident occurred last night. The situation is unclear even now."

Itou seeming satisfied with the answer turned to the man and regarded him with kindness. "Ah, now that's terrible."

"We do not wish to trouble you with this for now. Once things have calmed down, I'll explain it in full detail this evening." Saitou continued. Everyone present couldn't believe their eyes. Saitou was diffusing the situation like any good commander should. Kondou felt a little disappointed in himself, but happy that he had a subordinate like him. Midnight cocked her head to the side watching the two men converse with interest, but borderline boredom as well.

"I see. I understand the situation since that is the case. I shall wait until this evening's meeting." Itou said; smiling he left the room in silence. A second later, sighs erupted around the room; they just barley dodged a bullet this time.

"It feels like he let us off the hook, doesn't it? Perhaps he really was satisfied with what Hajime-Kun told him..." Souji said from his

place; back against the wall. Midnight purred in agreement at his words; tail swishing with happiness.

"Let's hope that's the case." Saitou agreed before settling down once more. Hijikata brought everyone's attention back to himself.

"The leaders have gathered here, with the exception of Sannan-San. It won't be long until Itou-San guessed what happened." Hijikata spoke his tone as dark as his mood.

Souji rubbed the back of his head as Midnight scratched behind hers. "You're right. That guy's troublesome."

"What should we do, Toshi?" Kondou looked to Hijikata for answers. The man in question sighed he knew what he had to do, but he didn't like it not to mention he still had Midnight to deal with. His eyes met Midnight's and he quickly diverted his eyes from her and settled on Chizuru's instead. She seemed emotionless, but her eyes were the window to her soul. Fear, worry and regret swirled in the brown depths. He sighed knowing today would not end well for either of them.

* * *

><p>Hijikata, Kondou and Souji along with Midnight walked down the long corridor to Sannan's room. As they arrived at their destination Hijikata stopped Kondou from opening the door by throwing his arm out in front of him. All eyes were on him questioning his motives.<p>

"After this there will be another emergency meeting. This time involving something more pressing." Hijikata spoke his voice gruff.

"Ah, got it Toshi." Kondou replied with a bright smile unaware of what the topic of the meeting was, but was sure it was nothing that they couldn't handle. Souji and Midnight on the other hand caught the look Hijikata gave them and both grew uneasy, but nodded nonetheless; they'd find out soon enough.

Hijikata opened the door to see Sannan up and at his desk as usual before the events of last night happened.

"Sannan-San! Shouldn't you be lying down?" Kondou worriedly asked the man.

Not turning around Sannan replied with a simple. "I'm feeling a little tired. Perhaps this is another side effect? It would be difficult to remain active during the day after taking the medicine."

Sannan turned around to look at the men and cat in the room. Hijikata and Kondou sat beside each other while Souji and Midnight opted once again to sit in the back against the wall.

"That means..." Souji warily drawled out.

"I'm no longer human." Sannan nodded at Souji's words.

Kondou interrupted with enthusiasm his face still serious. "But it's

great that you're still alive. That alone is enough!"

"So...Has your arm been healed?" Souji looked down as he spoke those words in concentration. Midnight looked up at him from his lap her ears twitching; she wondered. The way her master said those words they sounded as if he was asking for another reason besides the obvious. Choosing to mull the thought over later she turned her attention back to the men.

Sannan turned back to face his desk once more, lifting his hand up. Sannan clenched his fist and re-opened several times showing them the proof about the drugs abilities.

"It seems to have recovered, at least so that it's no longer an inconvenience."

"But now you can't move around in the day, right?" Souji questioned again.

Hearing his words Sannan looked at them. His eyes narrowed and a kind, but lonely smile spread across his face before he spoke the words that made everyone in the rooms heart sink.

"Just tell them that I'm dead."

After those words were spoken it was as if he really was dead. Hijikata and Kondou shared a look of shock, whereas Souji looked grim but otherwise unemotional to the whole thing as if he knew what was to come, and Midnight. Midnight simply stared at the man heartbroken; her eyes filling up with what seemed to be tears. _'Cat's don't cry, in situations like this.'_ She thought before she blinked and looked to the ground.

Sannan closed his eyes, his smile still on his face. "From now on, I'll serve as the Shinsengumi's example for the success of the medicine. We were ordered by the Shogunate to keep the existence of the medicine a secret. If I'm 'dead' then the medicine can remain a secret. If the medicine no longer has any consistent side effects then we can start using it."

Midnight hoped the medicine would never not have any consistent side effects. If he were to be able to make it completely 'safe' for it to be used with no other side effects showing up later on; she feared her masters would turn to it for salvation and that she couldn't let happen. It would mean they were dead.

"Is that the only option we have?" Hijikata asked.

"Well, it's the decision that Sannan-San has made for himself." Souji retorted.

"In that case, the matter of a new headquarters needs to be taken seriously." Hijikata said. His words making Kondou and Souji do a double take. "If we are to hide Sannan-San from the eyes of the Itou clan; we need a larger location. Our current location is too small."

With that the matter was settled, but even with that one matter settled more problems would soon arrive.

* * *

><p>"What!?" A loud scream came from the meeting room.<p>

"Shut it Heisuke, we're suppose to be quiet remember, dumb ass! But he has a point...What?" The man that spoke was Shinpachi and currently he and Heisuke along with the other captains and commander were discussing a matter of utmost importance; Midnight.

Hijikata sighed at the commotion; Kondou waved his hand to silence everyone. Hijikata nodded a thanks before speaking.

"I know it seems to be a shock to most of you, but my resources have told me that Midnight is not a normal cat by any standards. Isn't that right Souji?"

All eyes fell onto the animal in question who sat rigid in the mentioned man's lap. Souji's knuckles were white but his face held a smirk of amusement.

"Ah? Whatever do you mean Hijikata-San? Midnight's just a cat, see ears and a tail." As proof to his statement he picked at Midnight's ears and tail making the scene more amusing then serious as it should have been; Hijikata though wasn't amused.

"Souji, you know what I mean. Midnight has been suspicious in what she's been doing. What you told me about what happened at the Ikedaya inn didn't make sense, but I kept quiet believing you wouldn't lie to me. But you did didn't you; the entire room was scorched like someone brought fire into the fight between you and that Kazama guy. Midnight was involved that time along with what happened with Sannan-San. Her and Chizuru both were present, and Sannan-San was unconscious seeming to have been thrown back away from the girl. Is that not enough suspicion to question not only her, but you as well?"

The atmosphere fell into coldness; every captain along with Kondou was staring at the two in question. No one wanted to think that Midnight was a threat or an enemy, but what their vice commander said was true; it was suspicious.

Midnight grew colder and she shrunk into Souji's embrace. She felt her master's arms tighten around her almost painfully. Her eyes met Souji's and she searched for the accusation she knew would be there, but he turned his eyes away from her opting to look at the men that stared at her the with accusation but with sorrow as well.

"Well looks like the cats out of the bag now, huh?" Souji chuckled at his own pun, before his face turned grim. "I think it's safe to assume Chizuru-chan spilled, huh? I told her if she did I'd kill her..."

His statement at one point in time would be considered funny; a joke, but when he said it this time it was full of malice. The captains reflexively reached for their katana's. His everyday saying was a threat and they were sure he would go through with it. Midnight felt her body move on its own her eyes slitting and her body surging with power.

"Come on, like I'd kill the brat now. I'm not stupid. I know I wouldn't even get the chance to cut her throat before you guys are on

me. It was a joke." It was anything, but one. But he knew he could fool everyone into thinking it though.

And as he thought everyone relaxed slightly, but they all still eyed the feline. They noted that her fur looked as if it was about to catch fire. Souji smiled down at her, seeing as they wouldn't jump him Souji continued.

"It's true. Midnight isn't exactly a normal cat. Truthfully I don't know what exactly she is, but that doesn't mean she's a threat or an enemy. If she was, wouldn't she of already attacked one of us or hell not even help us when we needed it? The time in Ikedaya inn was the first time I realized she wasn't normal. But not once did I think she was a threat to me. She fought to protect me and that damn girl. She used her power if that's what you could call it to protect when she could have kept pretending she was normal and let me die!"

Souji grew angry. He felt defensive about Midnight that much he knew, but these other emotions swelling inside him confused him. He knew of anger, sadness but this emotion made him feel cold all over; made his body shake but, not with anticipation. Then he realized what he was feeling was no doubt what Midnight was feeling at this very moment as well; fear. That made him chuckle to think he was feeling fear for the first time. He never felt it when he was going into battle, death didn't scare him but this; this scared him. He calmed his ragged breathing. He was grateful that the others hadn't talked; instead they let him have time to collect himself. As he did he stared into each and every one of their eyes he had stopped on Kondou's, but the man's eyes held so much sorrow that it pained Souji to look at them. So he let his eye's rest on the man that was at fault; Hijikata.

"If you want to harm Midnight; want to kill her then you'll have to go through me because she's my responsibility, my cat. I brought her here and what happens to her happens to me."

Souji smiled at them. He didn't know what the outcome would be. He could only hope they would choose not to kill her. He didn't feel like fighting them, but he wasn't just going to roll over like some dog and let them do whatever they pleased to her. He had hope; something he never thought he'd have again, not since he was a child before his mother and father died and his damned sister abandoned him.

Everyone looked down except Hijikata. He chose to stare right back at Souji then Midnight. He wished she could talk; it would make things easier. She could explain herself; help them understand what she was, but she couldn't. He sighed catching everyone's attention. He turned to Kondou.

"Kondou-San, there's not doubt about Midnight; she's not normal. But...even though knowingâ€|what I should do? No, what we should do; it doesn't make this any easier. I want your opinion on this matter."

The aforementioned man looked around the room; he noted everyone's grim expression, "Toshi...This is hard. Midnightâ€|Midnight wasn't suppose cause so much trouble; shouldn't have had anything to do with war or death. She was meant to only be something to come home to after a long day of fighting; something to make us happy when off the battlefield. And she did that and no one can deny we all love her.

I...I choose to not harm her in anyway."

Once Kondou said those words the tension was broke. The others quickly agreed with their own words.

"Look, I understand she's dangerous there's no doubt about that, but to me she's a member of the Shinsengumi as well and we protect each other including her." Sano said.

"I agree with Sano. Midnight never tried to hurt us so I don't believe she'd ever do it in the future!" Shinpachi agreed loudly.

"Sano-San and Shinpatsu-San are right! There's no way Midnight is a threat she's our friend. She's our cat!" Heisuke readily agreed.

"I don't like that we must choose what to do with someone we all came to love and cherish; even me. The rules say we should dispose of her before she becomes more of a problem, but I cannot do that. This is one rule I will willingly break. I'm sorry." Saitou stated quietly.

A smile fitted onto everyone's face. Hijikata couldn't fight his own from forming he turned his attention to Souji and Midnight, and spoke the final verdict.

"We won't kill her but there is going to be some ground rules she has to follow and you follow as well Souji." Both Souji and Midnight nodded. "Lay them on us Hijikata-San, you damn hypocrite."

Hijikata ignored the jab from Souji. "One, Midnight you cannot use your power anymore. You're a cat and you must act like a cat, and no damn normal cat can do the things I've heard you can do. Two, you will always be with one of the captains. Three when one of us gives you an order I expect you to follow it, even if we are telling you to not involve yourself in a fight, and the fourth rule goes to both you and Souji, you are not allowed to harm Chizuru in any way. Got it?"

"Man Hijikata-San those rules are harsh don't ya think. Oh well guess we have to abide by them, huh Midnight~." Souji petted Midnight who the entire time through the whole commotion was quiet. She was grateful they all decided not to kill her, but the rules made her upset and that much harder to help her masters. She knew already she would break at least three of the four and her punishment could be death. She closed her eyes and jumped from Souji's lap. She trotted into the middle of the room.

All attention was on her. Her icy blue eyes met all of theirs. Her tail swishing left to right. She meowed once hopping they could tell what she wanted to show them.

"Hm? I think Midnight wants to show you guys her ability." She thanked her master; he always knew what she wanted to say. Sitting down she concentrated.

"Move back." Souji ordered.

Everyone did as told and soon their eyes widened in shock and awe. They watched as Midnight's body became engulfed with blue fire within

seconds after they moved away. Heisuke moved forward; scared for the cat, but Souji stopped him.

"Don't this is her fire. You touch her and you're probably gonna burn your hand off, Heisuke-Kun."

Heisuke quickly stepped back to the wall and watched with the others as tendrils of black blue fire circled the cat's body. The flames moved around the room; touching, but not burning. The men stiffened when a few of the flames touched them, but they noticed it didn't leave a scorch burn as they had expected; instead where the fire touched them was cold. Devoid of life it seemed.

Heisuke was the brave one. He reached out and grabbed one softly then he tightened his hold on it and it broke. The flames fell to the floor and Heisuke freaked out. "I'm sorry! I didn't mean to break it!"

"Heisuke look what you did! This is why we don't let you handle anything bigger then you!" Shinpachi yelled at him.

"What!? Take that back! And I'm so bigger then these flames. You making fun of my size!? I'll show you!"

The two men got into each other's face, but before they could continue a wall of flame erupted in between them; both jumped back and fell to the ground. They heard a snicker behind them and they saw Midnight with Souji beside her encased in flames; her paw was in front of her mouth. Souji smirked at them.

"If you can't handle the fire get out of the room." He jabbed.

Both men glared at him, but were interrupted when they heard a growling coming from their stomachs. Both sheepishly held their stomachs and said. "Looks like its dinner time!"

Then they rushed out of the flaming room; towards the kitchen to see if dinner was ready. Hijikata sighed as the flames resided. He was shocked to say the least he didn't expect the feline to reveal her power to them. It showed how much she trusted them now; even though he had just questioned her trustfulness. He nodded to the cat as everyone got ready to eat. He made a quick exit out of the room waiting for the cat to follow and hopefully alone.

Seconds later, he heard a soft padding on the floor behind him. He looked down to see Midnight at his heels; eyes downcast. The man sighed and reached down to pet her. "Believe it or not. I wasn't going to have you killed. I'm not that much of an oni."

He saw the shock in the cat's eyes. He felt somewhat proud he could fool not only the feline, but possibly Souji as well. He smiled softly raising his head to the sky. "The rules I made are to keep you safe. If your secret were to get out; who knows what the Shogunate would do to you. You and Chizuru both are in danger; I strongly want you to be cautious just because we won't kill you doesn't mean we won't find a way to cage you if you break them. Remember that."

Midnight felt herself swell with warmth. She should have been angry at him, but she couldn't find it in herself to be. For too long in

her life she has hated and sought revenge; she was tired of it. These men helped her realize there was more to life and her presence. Her actions had threatened their way of life and Hijikata had to act on it; she didn't blame him. She leapt into his arms and rubbed her head against his chin. The man grunted but allowed her to do so. He softly rubbed her head with one hand while the other held her up.

Truthfully, he could never hurt the feline. He too had become too attached to her to do so, but that didn't mean he couldn't be a hard ass in order to protect what he wanted to protect. Like the others said, she was a part of the Shinsengumi and that meant she had to follow their rules and he had to enforce them. The sounds behind them in the room became louder; crashes and yells came through the thin door.

"Seems the food has arrived. Let's go before they eat our portions as well." Hijikata grunted out. He petted the cat once more; allowing her to jump out of his arms. He opened the door and entered the chaotic war zone.

Midnight took a few minutes before heading in. She wasn't worried about her food being eaten; her master would keep it safe. Her thoughts mulled over all that happened today. The dark presence was growing stronger; the war coming sooner than she would have liked. Kazama would make his move soon and that Itou guy as well. And then her master worried her. She had caught on to it earlier; the way he talked to Sannan-San about his arm. He talked as if he wondered if it truly could heal anything. She knew something plagued him, but what she didn't know; she had to find out and soon if she was to help him.

The feline sighed and stretched. Things were happening all too soon and she would have to become a bigger part in the events to come in order to help and protect her masters.

"Oi! Midnight, hurry up! If you don't I'll eat your fish!"

"Heisuke, you touch her food and I'll kill you."

Heisuke's reply was cut off when Shinpachi stole a piece of his fish off his plate. Midnight chuckled in her head at the scene before making her way to her master's side as a cat is suppose to do.

End
file.